MYTH AND MODERN LITERATURE by John Peale Bishop

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The Saturday Review of Literature

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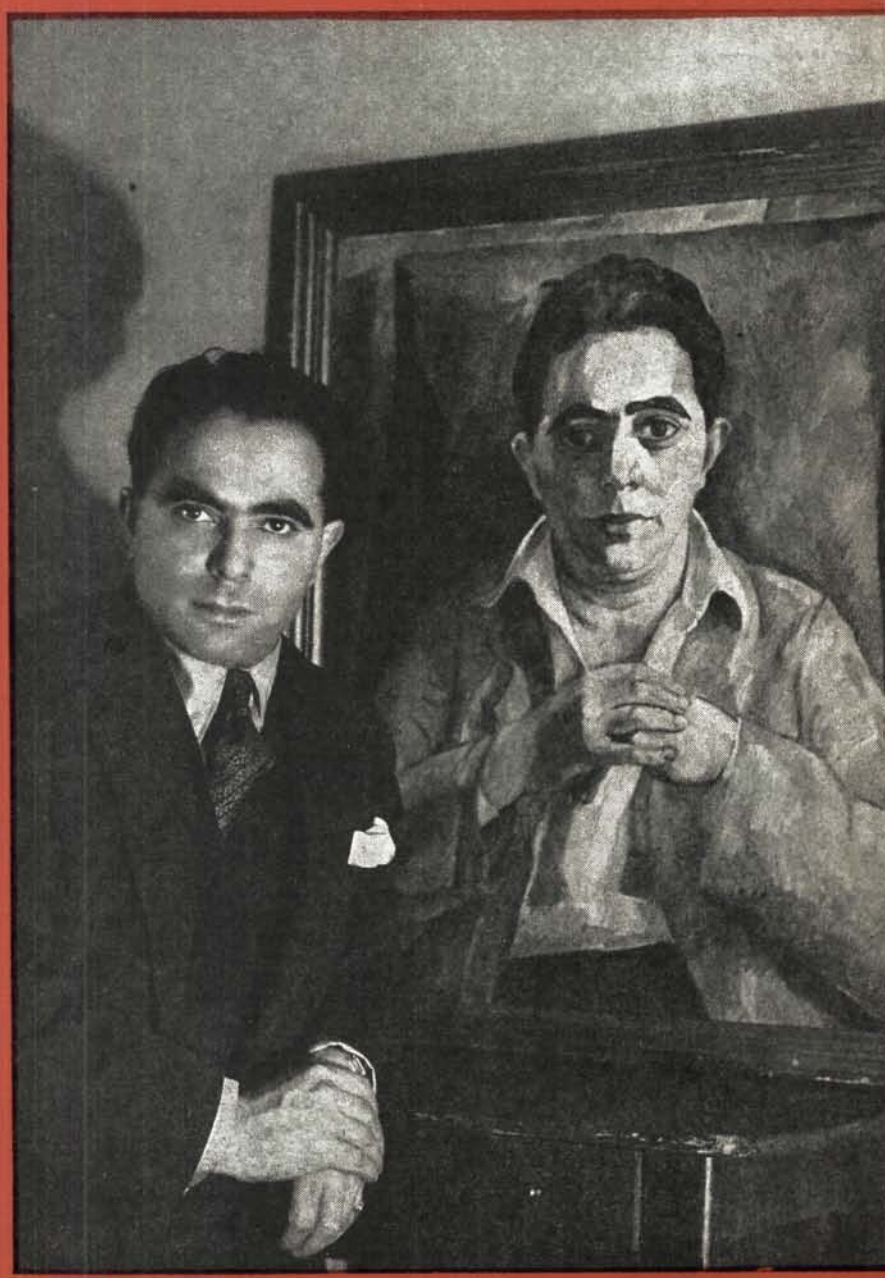

Barbara Ker-Seymer

LOUIS GOLDING (with a painting of himself by Edward Wolfe). "Mr. Emmanuel is a tract for the times, and the voice of a people speaks through it" . . . *(See page 6)*

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The Myth and Modern Literature

BY JOHN PEALE BISHOP

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John Peale Bishop

WHY have so many good writers recently come out of the South? Why has that part of the country which, not so long ago, meant little or nothing when literature was considered, why has it, after a silence so prolonged, suddenly found so many writers to call its own? The South has not prospered lately. It was with the depression that most of its writers, some of whom had been working unregarded for years, began to acquire an audience. Their books had not been built out of low-price cotton. Not all Southerners who are read are to be taken seriously. But there are some who would have to be included in any serious reckoning of American writers today, a saving remnant that is, perhaps, not so small. Certainly, it will not seem small to anyone who can remember when Mr. Mencken was a literary critic and the South was his particular literary desert, to which he was never tired of returning in order to declaim that it was, apart from Mr. James Branch Cabell, all an arid vacancy.

Why has the South, in so short a time, produced so many writers of its own? The question can be put in a more general form. What conditions are necessary that a body of literature come into being in a country, in a region, which hitherto has had little or none that was of more than local interest? It would be convenient if we could say that it comes with prosperity. But we cannot say of literature, as we well might of architecture, even that it perishes from poverty. The use of prosperity, so far as the writer is concerned, for he is not likely to share in it personally, is that he may, through his work, reflect some of the surrounding confidence. The apparent and prodigious wealth of America in the ten years after the war, the prestige that followed the disposal of so much power, did leave its mark on American writing. But the Southern writer, unless he happened to be Thomas Wolfe, did not have much to do with that prodigality. He did not believe in its premises; how, then, was he to believe in its promises? The moral collapse that came with the crash of 1929 restored his own moral confidence. And like the French in those years, before they themselves became involved, he was not above experiencing a certain pleasure in the fact that events had proved him right.

Men and women no longer knew what to do. And so they read, as they had not read the novels of Stark Young before, "So Red the Rose," in which women and men, at every hour of the day, knew just what to do. Subject to reverses no less serious, since they, too, had to see their world fallen about them, Stark Young's characters had not fallen into moral uncertainty. What Americans were later involved in was not merely an economic but a moral crisis. What was lost was more than money, more certainly than paper profits. What was gone was the myth of progress.

It is by such myths that men live. Throughout the nineteenth century they had been carried forward, at a pace that never diminished, by the myth of progress. This was true in Europe, as well as in America, but because this was a country for pioneers, Americans were carried much faster and further.

Before considering the Southern writers more closely, it may be well to look at another literature, which like theirs, came out of nothing, or next to nothing, and which, though it thought of itself as national, may as well be called regional. For when the Irish Renaissance began, though the Irish were a people who could claim a past, and hence a consciousness which was not that of their conquerors, they could not call themselves a nation. They did not—they do not yet—possess the whole of their small island. Their relation to England is not exactly that of the South to the East, but the two have enough in common to make comparison possible.

Their literature, Yeats tell us in his "Ireland after the Fall of Parnell," had fallen into contempt. "No educated man ever bought an Irish book." And the one scholar of Dublin, who had anything of a reputation outside his own country, Edward Dowden, used to say that he could recognize an Irish book by the smell, even the glue that held the pages together within the binding being inferior. And yet, in a space of time which looking back on it must seem incredibly short, a literature was created which, though it excited the liveliest opposition in Ireland, was soon recognized as having importance by those who had no patriotic reasons either to condemn or to praise. Many men, and at least one woman, contributed to that movement, and even the failures among them may have been in a measure indispensable to it; for every movement in the arts demands a mass of

Next Week

SONS WITHOUT ANGER
By STANLEY YOUNG
Reviewed by J. P. Marquand

ROAD TO EMPIRE
By FLETCHER PRATT
Reviewed by Crane Brinton

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workers whose endeavors will never come to much. The Irish Renaissance created a considerable literature; while it was first addressed to the Irish, it by no means limited its appeal to them.

Now the Irish had, at the time the generation of Yeats began writing, a myth to work against: the myth of Young Ireland. They also had, which was of importance to some of them, an heroic past, a world so misty and remote that, when recovered either from popular or scholarly memory, whatever happened there appeared to have mythological proportions. Personally, I have never been able to work up much interest in the Irish myths. I can appreciate the words into which the modern poets have put them, but the myths themselves seem to me to have very little to say. Whether in Synge's cloak or Yeats's embroidered coat, Deirdre remains no more tangible to me than so much Celtic twilight; she is not another Helen. And it is worth remarking that Yeats as he grew older more and more abandoned the world of Irish mythology and if he wanted a myth took one, like that of Leda and the Swan, which is accessible to anyone of European mind.

For if I am to speak of literature and the myth, I must make it clear that this is not the sort of myth with which I am now concerned. Because we all carry around with us, below the mind that is conscious of modernity, a primitive mind—to which at time we have access, if only in sleep—myths which are the true creations of that mind have an endless power to stir us. And since the conscious mind, working over these myths, can through them express relations which, if put into a more abstract form, would suffer a loss both in complication and profundity, they are of great use to the poet. But when they are used—and this is my point—they must be used directly, which is exactly what Yeats does in his great sonnet on Leda. Whereas, in the case of what I shall call the contemporary myths, which are created not by the unconscious but the conscious mind, he must work in opposition.

The myth of Young Ireland was of this latter sort; and so was the myth of the Old South. Both were romantic. And when Synge put his "Playboy of the Western World" against the romantic popular conception of Ireland, he was assailed with the same cries of rage and hurt as resounded all over Georgia toward Erskine Caldwell when he set down his truth about "Tobacco Road."

These myths came into being in part to compensate a proud people who, for all they had been conquered, had by no means foregone their contempt for those who had overcome them. To be held subject by those whom you feel to be your inferiors in everything but wealth and numbers, in time makes for a romantic conceit, which may well mask a profound conviction of inferiority. It precludes criticism, and any people who will allow no criticism can scarcely avoid becoming less than their former selves. Allen Tate has analyzed the part that slavery played in this avoidance of criticism. While it lasted, it made the Southerners very touchy to outside comment; when it was gone, they felt they had lost their only imperfection.

"All the past," Yeats says of the prose of Young Ireland, "had been turned into a melodrama with Ireland for blameless hero." And the poetry differed from the prose in being not less occupied with Irish virtue, but only in being a little less taken up with the invader's vices. The parallel literature in the South is to be found in the novels of Thomas Nelson Page. But the Old South was no invention of Page's, and still less of his followers; it was a spontaneous creation of defeat and despair. It found its heroic Danaans in the ragged armies of Lee.

Thomas Nelson Page: Old South corresponded to young Ireland.

A myth is of great use to a writer since through it he comes in contact, as he might not otherwise do, with the common mind and makes its resources of feeling and sentiment, its depths of desire, his own. But in his employment of the myth, he must complicate and correct it, according to his own sense of the fatal abundance of life, its excess and its cruelty. For in order to form any conception of life that will form a consistent whole, something must be left out; and the common man, who is more intent on conserving the sources of his life than on contemplating them, will almost always begin by leaving out the essential cruelty of living things. This is so in any society. In the myth, Ireland is Kathleen ni Houlihan, an old hag, whose love is strong enough to draw the young man from his bride; but it is her attraction and not the death towards which she draws him that is dwelt on. And as long as young men must die for her, it is perhaps just as well that they look on her in this way. But to Stephen Dedalus, Ireland is the old sow that eats her farrow.

One of the first things a creative artist will do, then, is to restore cruelty in his aspect of things. Mr. Caldwell runs an automobile over the old grandmother in "Tobacco Road" and leaves her to rot indifferently on the ground, while what is perhaps his most famous story, "Kneel to the Rising Sun," is piled with purposeful and meaningless cruelty. Mr. Faulkner, who is a more sensitive person than Mr. Caldwell, and apparently even more vulnerable to pain, has spared his readers no horror that either local tales of his part of the country or his own hurt imagination could suggest. It is not that Southerners are more cruel than other Americans, though poverty is a great encourager of cruelty and parts of the South have long been poor. It is rather that when men are cruel there it will be in a more personal and eccentric way than in the environs of Detroit and Red River, where murder, like everything else, is mechanized. Cruelty is one of the ways in which life in the South exceeds the myth. Perhaps because of an old recollection of slavery, perhaps, too, because of a deep instinct for social order, it was necessary in the Southern myth that as much as possible cruelty should be left out. In the Irish myth, incompetence was accounted charm, truculence became bravery, bigotry was a finer faith, and treachery a nobler loyalty.

The Southern myth was romantic. Considering the time in which it took form, it would be foolish to expect it to be anything else. But the mood of the present generation of Southern writers is not romantic. And when they began to work among the mythical remnants of the Old South and got down to facts, what they discovered was a society which though it constantly entertained romance was severely classical. What they found was a social order which, though colored

(*Continued on page* 14)

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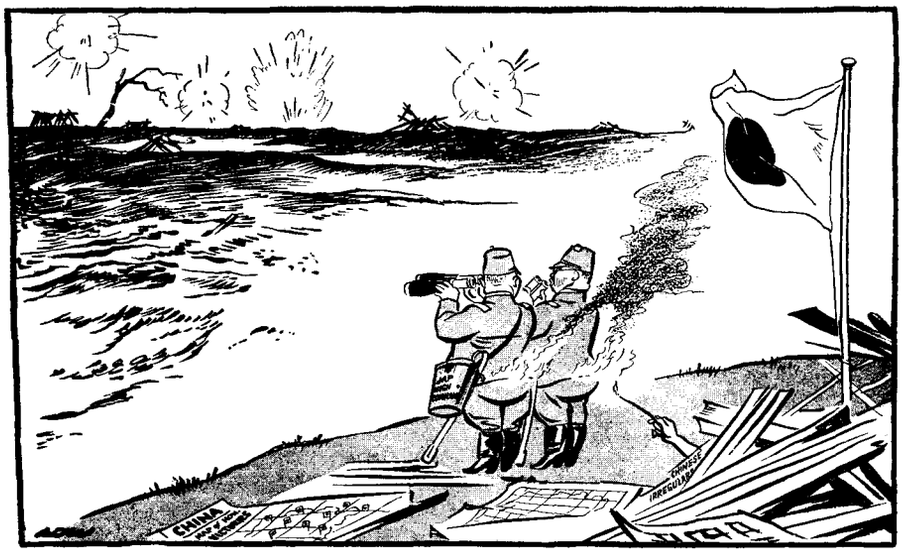

"Do you smell something burning?" From "A Cartoon History of Our Times."

Searchlight on Stupidity

A CARTOON HISTORY OF OUR TIMES. By David Low. With an introduction and text by Quincy Howe. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1939. 173 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by VINCENT SHEEAN

A STORY repeated by persons who should know has it that Lord Halifax, when he was Lord Privy Seal and made his visit to Berlin in 1937—the beginning of active "appeasement"—was, for the first half hour of his interview with Adolf Hitler, furiously harangued upon the subject of David Low's cartoons. The Führer said (according to this story) that he understood the fable of "freedom of the press" in democratic countries: he did not believe it, but he understood the necessity for such a fable. However, said he, the cartoons of David Low did not come within any definition known to him of the "press," could be considered only as personal attacks, and, as such, were exceedingly displeasing to him; he demanded why in the name of appeasement the British government could not put a stop to these cartoons and punish their perpetrator. All the more serious business of Lord Halifax's visit had to wait until the Führer's tempest on this subject had subsided.

Low has worthily earned the enmity of Hitler, Mussolini, and their accomplices. The artist, a New Zealander of something less than fifty, has a gift of exceptional brilliance, which he uses without pity upon fascist and tory gangsterism abroad and at home. In the course of his career as a political caricaturist he has had occasion to create an unforgettable character, Colonel Blimp, a fat and pompous old gentleman with a walrus mustache who objects to any kind of change in anything, detests the working classes of all countries, sees "Red" influences upon all but himself, and refuses to acknowledge the profound change that has come over political thinking since the war. This imaginary personage often seems more real, more positive, than the others who people the world of Low's cartoons—the Chamberlain, Hitler, Daladier, Mussolini, and Eden who can hardly be believed even when they are visibly performing. Low himself has observed this fact, and remarks in an introduction to one of his English editions that the reality has, nowadays, made caricature almost impossible. It can be said, however, to the glory of this artist, that his Chamberlain is nearly as funny as the original without being quite so sinister. Low finds more stupidity than villainy in the world, even among his villains.

This volume traces a history of our times, as its title declares, in Low's cartoons on six subjects — disarmament, collective security, the Far East, Spain, the Axis, and the British Empire — chronologically arranged and tactfully annotated by Quincy Howe. There is a steady increase in bitterness as we come into 1939, and indeed some of the later work of Low is as damning as anything ever produced about the crime and folly of the period. In one caricature Mr. Neville Chamberlain kneels at Mussolini's feet to wash his hands in the Mediterranean; this appeared on the signature of the Anglo-Italian Agreement in April, 1938, with the caption, "He took water and washed his hands." Mr. Chamberlain is seen in the dress of a Roman procurator. In another, General Franco surveys the woeful ruins of Guernica and says: "You've got to admit I'm bringing peace to the poor suffering Basques." In another, the specter of death and disaster admits Eduard Benes to a room where Haile Selassie and Schusnigg are already seated. These caricatures—if that is the word for them—are bitter as swill. But others are genuinely funny, as when we see Mr. Chamberlain in a circus performer's tights, juggling with his "Halifaxis," or when we see Japan, a fat Oriental Brünnhilde, managing a see-saw on which the United States and Great Britain, fat Occidental Brünnhildes, are bounced up or down at will.

Low's gift for caricature is very great, perhaps the greatest we have known in our times. But his critical intelligence is even more remarkable than his professional skill in drawing. No journalist or politician has reached the essentials with more power or precision than this cartoonist of the *Evening Standard.* And most remarkable of all is the fact that the artist's employer, Lord Beaverbrook, a Tory of Tories, continues to print these productions even when they run directly counter to the policy of the paper. The fact proves, in part, that Lord Beaverbrook is a newspaper man who appreciates first-class work; but it also proves that he has a shrewd sense of circulation values. For Low is not only more admired than any cartoonist in England: he is also more eagerly followed, by hundreds of thousands of people, than any political commentator. His view of policy has certainly penetrated the heads even of a good many Colonel Blimps, and the present resistant mood of England is one which he has endeavored to arouse for the past five years.

Only Praise

BY MARION N. BYERS

I HAVE only praise
For the word mesmeric,
The lyrical phrase
And the lovely lyric

That make into pulsating
Rhythm and cadence
The heart's own beating,
And never a silence

And never a stutter
To trouble the rhyme,
Or a blasphemous titter
At the wrong time.

Let the poem pursue
Its musical ways.
For those who can do it
I have only praise.

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"The Jig Is Up"

FACTORIES IN THE FIELDS. The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California. By Carey McWilliams. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1939. 325 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS ADAMIC

STEINBECK'S "Grapes of Wrath" seems to be well on the way to becoming the "Anthony Adverse" and "Gone with the Wind" of 1939. Everybody seems to be reading it, including, I am told, "everybody in Washington." The capitol dome in Sacramento rings with its "wrath." The story has been bought by a leading Hollywood producer, who is said to be under pressure in California either to suppress it so far as the movies are concerned or ruin it in production. Several California newspapers published personal attacks on Steinbeck, while other commentators in the Golden State and elsewhere in the country already have tacked onto the fine, amazingly popular novel such labels as "The 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' of the landless farmers."

Most of Steinbeck's readers will agree, or will be even inclined to urge, that something be done for the homeless people in California and about the entire sordid but colorful mess that he presents so well. They will be emotionally for action; just what kind of action, however, they will be at a loss to say—unless they read Carey McWilliams's extremely competent, high-minded, and purposeful non-fiction book on the same subject.

The two books complement one another. Steinbeck's success gives McWilliams's study nationwide timeliness. "Factories in the Field," in turn, does what Steinbeck did not—could not—do in a novel. It draws an analytical, factual picture of the migratory farm labor situation in California, which involves hundreds of thousands of people, and gives the Steinbeck-stirred indignation intellectual direction toward intelligent action. This direction gains significance when we know that Carey McWilliams — a gentle-mannered, tough-minded young idealist from Colorado who has been a lawyer in Los Angeles for the past fifteen years—is a personal and political friend and social-economic adviser of Governor Olson, who a few months ago appointed him head of the State Division of Immigration and Housing, which has jurisdiction over the colossal migratory labor problem.

"Factories in the Field" is an accurate title, under which McWilliams traces in sixteen concise chapters the entire development of the situation through more than fifty years of California's agricultural, financial, and social history to the painful point where Steinbeck picks it up. The situation, in other words, is nothing new; only formerly it involved mostly Chinese, Mexicans, Filipinos, Italians, Armenians, and single Americans of the type of the restless, irresponsible hero in the play "They Knew What They Wanted." Now it includes also tens of thousands of draught-and-depression-hit "Okie" and "Texican" families, who are old-stock Anglo-Saxon Americans, not members of the numerically least important racial minorities. And now, this being so, says Carey McWilliams, "the jig is up." Now the out-and-out exploitation of poverty, ill-luck, and homelessness must cease.

McWilliams suggests the direction in which a program for action must be sought. I shall not try to summarize here what his suggestions are, for any brief statement of them is apt to do them injustice. They should be read in the light of the entire book.

"Factories in the Field" took three years to prepare. It was finished several months before "The Grapes of Wrath." Neither of the authors was aware of what the other was doing. Steinbeck created in the country the mood which, I think, will recognize the importance of McWilliams's study. McWilliams gives point to Steinbeck's novel, which ends rather suddenly and weakly in symbolism — in part, no doubt, because it is a novel.

Migratory workers in Sacramento Valley. From "California: a Guide to the Golden State (Hastings House).

Voice of a People

MR. EMMANUEL. By Louis Golding. New York: The Viking Press. 1939. 444 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

FOR the sake of a refugee German-Jewish lad, who was eating his heart out in England because he did not know whether his mother was alive or dead, Mr. Isaac Emmanuel, of Magnolia Street, Doomington, undertook a mission to Herr Hitler's Germany. Frau Rosenheim had written regularly to her son Bruno, so when her letters ceased to arrive the boy's friends began to make inquiries. But the Refugee Committee in London could tell them nothing, and the Jewish Community in Berlin curtly replied that the matter was without interest for them. It was as though Frau Rosenheim had vanished from the earth, and perhaps she had, but there was no certainty. When Bruno attempted suicide, it was obvious that something must be done. Old Mr. Emmanuel, frail, gentle, and sixty-odd, determined to do it. People did not simply disappear. It was ridiculous! He would soon find out what was what.

So, armed with his British passport, he sallied forth. This passport was his staff and his shield. True, he was a little old Jew who had been born in Russia, but he was also now an Englishman, and if there were any difficulties he would show them what being an Englishman meant. But it was Herr Hitler's Germany that showed Mr. Emmanuel what Nazism means, and the demonstration is the subject

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and substance of Louis Golding's book. It is a horrifying demonstration, as are all exhibitions of Nazism for those who have grown up with even a fractional faith in the rights of the individual under a system of protective law and attempted justice. It tells us nothing new about Hitlerism, but Mr. Golding has given new force to the familiar truth by incorporating it in one more personal, intensely affecting history. The function that this novel performs aside from its literary values is definite, for it is characteristic of us human beings that we are more profoundly moved by a single human story than by massed statistics that multiply such stories to an anonymous sum that is beyond our powers of realization or response. And the tale of Isaac Emmanuel is moving, indeed.

Avoiding synopsis, it is enough to say here that Mr. Emmanuel encountered a way of life that was at first baffling to him, then frightening, and finally nightmarish in its calculated injustice and brutality. The pattern of this brutality has become familiar to us through stories, plays, and factual reports, but it can never cease to shock, and the shock is greatest when, as in this instance, the victim of the pattern is feeble, innocent, and lovable. One may suspect that a real counterpart of the fictitious Mr. Emmanuel would be too feeble to survive the trials endured by Magnolia Street's knight-errant, but the fictitious Mr. Emmanuel is entirely credible, and he is a symbol as well as a man,—the symbol of a race whose powers of survival are unique, that will look back upon Hitler as it now looks back upon Egypt and Rome.

Mr. Golding has shaped his novel well. It gathers pace and increases its claims upon our interest as it proceeds; the curve of excitement mounts to a climax and a denouement that are entirely satisfying. It leaves us, too, desiring in full another story that is told here only in part; the story of Jewish Elsie Silver, who became the mistress of a powerful Nazi leader, and who was able to save her father's friend when a government had failed.

"Mr. Emmanuel" is a tract for the times, and the voice of a people speaks through it, but it is also an absorbing, stirring, first-rate work of fiction.

Book Note

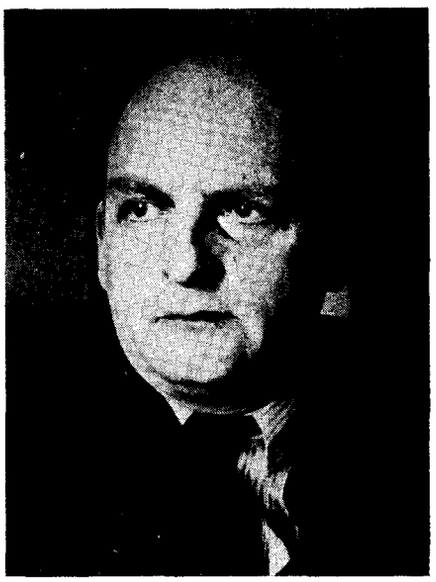
THE new work
Of John Dos Passos
Is a pain and an irk
To the *New Masses*.
For John has fallen
Away from Stalin,—
A sin that's cardinal
And unpardonal.

M. C.

Underground in Germany

MEN AGAINST HITLER. By Fritz Max Cahen. Adapted, with an introduction by Wythe Williams. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 1939. 258 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by JOSEPH HILTON SMYTH



Fritz Max Cahen

THE flood of anti-Nazi books during the past six years has consisted of two easy discernible streams. The greater volume has come from the pen of exiled German politicians, writers, and journalists of more or less left complexion. At the same time, however, there has been a steadily growing number of books by dissident German conservatives such as Kurt Ludecke, Otto Strasser, and lately Hermann Rauschning, former President of the Danzig Senate.

"Men against Hitler," by Fritz Max Cahen, definitely belongs in the second category. Written by a former member of the German Foreign Office and an associate of Count Brockdorff-Rantzau, the head of the German peace delegation at Versailles, it deserves close scrutiny by all those concerned with the ubiquitous questions: Is there as yet any concerted opposition to Hitler within Germany? And if so, how does it operate? The author's answer to the first question is strongly in the affirmative. He claims that at least fifty per cent of the German people are in disagreement with Hitler, and that the forces which some day may overthrow the Hitler regime have already taken definite shape. "Some day, when there are barricades in Germany, the unknown bourgeois youth will be there," he writes.

The second question, as to how the opposition functions, is answered by the author in great detail. Those chapters dealing with the undercover operations, the courier service, the clandestine newspapers and broadcasting stations, the daily ferocious and bitter fight against the sinister secret police, are perhaps the best.

Even before Hitler's meteoric rise to power, Cahen, with rare foresight, had organized, as a bulwark against National Socialism, the "German Vanguard." Later, an exile himself, he started to organize and coördinate various other groups of exiles—exclusive of the Communists, whose participation in his various "Popular Front" schemes he regarded as detrimental to the cause. On the other hand, Cahen seems to have found it quite possible to work hand in hand with a right-wing extremist such as Dr. Otto Strasser, renegade from the Nazi Party and leader of the Nazi splinter group, called the "Black Front." Cahen does seem to have originally distrusted Strasser, and he does not advance sufficient reasons for their eventual collaboration.

Cahen asserts that a slow but distinct process of disintegration is taking place inside the Nazi ranks. The future leaders of the anti-Nazi rebellion are already in training. It is his thesis that the army may be counted upon to join a people's movement against Hitler, once the mass of the people has come to realize that Hitler means war and the destruction of Germany. Cahen is a firm believer in a truly progressive European Federation.

Despite the elaborate story of underground opposition carried on by the author and his associates, the reader, unfortunately, fails to become convinced that the opposition is making much headway. The account of the various groups and their failure—at least for the time being—is too strongly reminiscent of the parliamentary system with its all-too-many parties that preceded Hitler. Nor is the reader left convinced that "millions are ready to set forth in the streets, prepared to demonstrate when the moment arrives."

The book is excellently edited by Wythe Williams, ace prophet of late —whose informant Cahen is said to have been for many years. It suffers to a certain extent from the author's inflated opinion of himself. It would seem that constructive work of the kind he describes can flourish only if those who carry it out recede behind the task, and not vice versa. However, this slightly irritating factor does not impair the value of the book.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Let Them Eat Cake

AFTER the Federal Theater Project was doomed by Congress, an editorial was published in the *New York Herald-Tribune* which sounded like a voice from the grave of all our Puritan-Methodist ancestors. At last, said the writer, we were getting back to practical realism. The principle that those on relief should be allowed to choose the nature of their work had been definitely repudiated. Unfortunately, he continued, other projects in the arts, and particularly in literature, had been left in the bill, but a victory had been won nevertheless. We were on our way back to the practical common sense of a nineteenth-century America which said to the worker, Root hog or die.

This is perhaps an overstatement of the editorial. The writer did not call relief workers hogs, nor did he threaten them with starvation. But the implications of his statement were quite as dangerous—and quite as unsound. He clearly believed that the great American public would agree with him that the arts—which contribute to pleasure of the senses, enrichment of the mind, rather than to food, shelter, and material resources—were not practical, not *work* in a man's world where there was no real necessity for such fripperies. He was right in one way. The great American public have, until recently, taken just that attitude. Their pioneering history conditioned them in the first century of the republic, in a society where art was at most an ornament, and usually a bad ornament. Their government, unlike other governments, did nothing or worse than nothing to encourage art and literature, either as a branch of education, or as a means of enriching the life of the state. Men and women not old now still remember in their youth the damning expression "not practical" applied by officials, parents, journalists, business men, farmers, to any movement of the spirit that did not increase bank accounts or help to exploit the wealth of the continent. And here in 1939, when one would suppose we had learned something of the impermanence of material security and the futility of a drab money-getting life, with the ugly remains of nineteenth-century America all about us, the old cry goes up again! If we have to spend money on work, let that work all be useful, realistic, practical. Don't waste money on beauty.

The second fallacy seems even more dangerous, because more deeply rooted in human prejudice. The unemployed have no right to choose the nature of their work. Since all human rights seem today to rest upon a shaky basis, it is, perhaps, unwise to argue that any one has a right even to happiness and a reasonable liberty. But the inexpediency of such an attitude should be evident without dragging in the question of right. What has psychology accomplished in the last decades if it has taught editorial writers nothing at all about human aptitudes and how, rightly handled, they increase efficiency! Obviously, an overstrained government in time of crisis cannot give to some millions of workers each the job that best fits him. Obviously, also, government, worker, and work would all be better off if it could. Indeed, it may surely be said that the first duty of a relief administration, in its own interest, is to provide as far as possible the kind of work which each man can do, and wants to do; as it is clearly its duty to prevent, so far as possible, its workers from trying to paint pictures when they are better fitted for plumbing, or being used to dig ditches when they should be making music or writing books. The attack upon the very mild effort of Uncle Sam to provide for esthetics and intellectuals is inspired by no logic, but only by the old American prejudice against the intellect, plus the slowly dying Puritan idea that, as Thoreau said ironically, the more perspiration in labor, the more virtue accrues to it.

The merits of neither the actual Federal Theater Project nor of the Arts projects in general enter into this argument. In fairness it should be said, however, that competent observers generally agree that the Federal Theater has been successful in the best sense. That it has not merely provided the right jobs for many people, but has supplied entertainment of a high order, and, what is even more important, stimulus to useful and creative work on making good drama part of the imaginative life of the people. As for the literary projects, while there are too many people who want to write and cannot and should not, yet it does not seem that relief in this direction is likely to burden the public with inefficient novelists, whereas such a contribution as the state guide book series, useful, excellent, durable, would never have been undertaken without government aid.

No, if we are to have unemployed, let us give them, when we can, the work they are fitted to do, and hence want to do. And, for heaven's sake, let us get rid at last of the sour and musty archaism that art is not practical, not useful, not work.

And let us realize once for all, that, however important it is to make relief economical, honest, and efficient, there is no excuse whatsoever for a patronizing attitude toward the unemployed. It is questionable whether a sociologist or a psychologist would admit that even the unemployables, so-called, are really responsible for their deficiencies. Certainly, capitalism can charge the unemployment of employables only upon its own lack of ability to make our economic system work. It is quite as foolish to remark, with a "sneer," let them do what they are told to do, as it was to say, let them eat cake. In fact, Marie Antoinette was less foolish than our supercilious grumblers, for those who have some hope of cake in their lives, may endure a shortage of bread.

H. S. C.

Havelock Ellis

HAVELOCK ELLIS considered the "Studies in the Psychology of Sex" the major work of his life, and this is the work that has been emphasized in most of the obituary comment. Enormous as the influence of this work has been, it is possible that he will be longer remembered as a man of letters than as a man of science. In thirty years the "Psychology of Sex" has been instrumental in revolutionizing the state of mind of the English-speaking—or English-reading—public; it paved the way for the reception of the work of Freud and Jung, which, in the field of psychological theory, has overshadowed that of Ellis, but which, without the pioneering of Ellis, would have met with even more popular and official resistance than it did. In literature, Ellis's contribution to the destruction of taboos made a reading public possible for writers like Joyce and Proust. It is the nature of an influence such as his that it comes to be taken for granted. But in literature Ellis was not only important as a catalytic agent; his "Study of British Genius" and "Dance of Life" are works of first-rate distinction. For six years before his death, at eighty, Ellis was at work on his autobiography; he finished it only in June. No other book is anticipated with more genuine interest.

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Letters to the Editor:

Moral Standards in Fiction; Job and "A Book of Miracles"

Potent Capsule

SIR:—Hurray for Margaret Culkin Banning! She has put the whole nauseous dose into a capsule, the contents of which are both pertinent and potent. Every serious reader of *SRL* will send her a mental vote of thanks for the power and timeliness of her appraisement.

Such articles help us to forget for the moment the offensiveness of your new Mother Hubbard; we simply turn it inside out with just a momentary thought of pity for poor Unc Querc—if the heat proves too much for him, you'll have to move him in.

Why, oh why, did you let L. J. H. Jr. review "Seven Grass Huts" when you have some such good reviewers on your list? He cannot see the wood for the trees nor the pampa for the dust in his eyes nor the jungle for the punkies; and to him an orchid is merely a form of plant life. Ugh!

LURA SOLLES COWAN.
Berkeley, Cal.

"I don't know a damn thing about love. I only do detective and horror."

Job

SIR:—The *SRL* has been my most warmly welcomed periodical for *almost* as many years as it has been published, and its book reviews are read by me each week with close attention.

A review by Basil Davenport of Ben Hecht's "A Book of Miracles" in the issue of June 17th, has aroused my curiosity. This review contains a reference to "a saintly rabbi who, like Job, turned at last and died blaspheming Jehovah." I should be deeply interested in knowing where Mr. Davenport obtained the information that Job died blaspheming Jehovah.

MRS. H. L. MILLNER.
Morganton, N. C.

Mr. Davenport Replies

SIR:—Your correspondent is quite right in rebuking me for writing a sentence which could be supposed to mean that Job died still blaspheming. It did not occur to me that any one would take it in this sense, but I ought to have foreseen the possibility, and I have only to apologize for my carelessness.

Since, however, I have received a very courteous note from another of your subscribers, inquiring why I said that Job blasphemed, perhaps I had better take this opportunity to speak briefly of that point. The general purport of Job's speeches is that Jehovah afflicts the righteous, in his own person, and allows the wicked to flourish, an accusation that is made in the most bitterly personal tone. See, for brief citations, IX 17: "For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds *without a cause*"; IX 23: "If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent"; XII 6: "The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure," with other passages too long to quote. I think that these charges of cruelty and injustice against the Almighty can fairly be called blasphemy (I acknowledge that the word is perhaps too strong, but I am unable to think of a word that indicates a milder degree of the same thing); and I think it can be maintained that they are felt to be so in the Book of Job. For after Jehovah has spoken out of the whirlwind, Job's final speech is "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Of what does Job repent? Not of anything before he began to complain; both Job and his biographer are agreed that he was a perfect and upright man until that point. It seems clear that Job repents of the presumption of which he had just been convicted by the Almighty. I am aware that there are other possible interpretations of the Book of Job, but I hope this will serve to explain, to any of your readers who may be interested, why I wrote as I did.

BASIL DAVENPORT.
New York City.

Nobel

SIR:—Shortly after reading Harland Manchester's splendid article on Alfred Nobel in the *SRL* for June 17th, I came across the following interesting item in the old *Buffalo Express* for February 18, 1901:—

> It is reported that the University of Chicago has been selected as one of the nine institutions which will choose the candidates for the Nobel prizes. The other institutions are the universities of Berlin, St. Petersburg, Vienna, Rome, Leyden, London, Paris, and Zurich. Mr. Nobel was a Swedish millionaire who left a large legacy for prizes to the greatest benefactors of humanity. The prizes go to the greatest discoverers in the domains of physical science, chemistry, and psychology, also to the author of the greatest literary work in the realm of idealism and to the man who is the greatest promoter of peace. The honor was entirely unexpected at the University of Chicago, it is said.

ROBERT M. BOLTWOOD.
Buffalo, N. Y.

Edward Bellamy

SIR:—The undersigned will appreciate hearing from anyone who has letters from Edward Bellamy, the author of "Looking Backward," or who knows where any may be found, or who has any significant recollections or information concerning Bellamy or concerning the direct influence of his work.

ARTHUR E. MORGAN.
Yellow Springs, Ohio.

Jefferson, Hamilton, Burr

SIR:—This represents the concluding period in my search for material on my book dealing with the impact of Jefferson, Hamilton and Burr on American History from 1789 to 1804. Do you think it possible that the *Review* can inform its readers of a few of my necessities? I seek letters or other data written by:

a. Edmond Genet in the year 1800 concerning the national election.

(*Continued on page* 21)

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Birth of a State

AMERICAN NABOB. By Holmes Alexander. New York: Harper & Bros. 1939. 473 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by FLETCHER PRATT

THERE is a lot of novel here, all of it about the transformation of the West Augusta district into the state of West Virginia under the twin influences of petroleum and the Civil War. There is an excellent account of both influences in their earliest stages—the confusion, unrest, oddly mingled motives of patriotism and profit, and families divided in the border states at the outbreak of the great rebellion—the crude derricks among the salt gums, the coming of the Italians, and labor trouble that stood midwife over the birth of oil. There is also in the book an excellent account of the lives, customs, and ideas of those singular West Virginia mountaineers, as firmly fixed to their earth as though they had been in it for thousands of years instead of (at the date at which the book is set) rather less than a hundred. There is some notably fine description of the progress of an oil boom town, and so many good incidents as to suggest that Mr. Alexander must have spent years collecting anecdotes.

Unfortunately there is too much of this good material and a good deal of it lies in the book as undigested as a bedtime lobster. Mr. Alexander has a historical sense so much better than his sense of character that he has produced a kind of history of West Virginia, with a name attached to the spirit of the state. Curtis Larkins is the name; he is the American nabob, growing up with the country. He is alternately hero and buffoon, coarse and tender, prescient and improvident, quixotic and dishonest in a series of changes not so much those of a complex character as of an incredible one. His wife Edna, representing the tidewater aristocracy in the makeup of the state, also displays variations in character as bewildering as any since Bret Harte tried to write a novel and produced a series of disconnected short stories wrapped round the name of Gabriel Conroy. Thus, when Edna's husband makes a trip to the Secession convention she is all worry, she is all tenderness when he returns; but a few days and a hundred pages later—Mr. Alexander's word for it, there is nothing much in her actions to show it—her husband is "the man she had once loved and had learned to hate."

In spite of these defects, which are serious, and what is probably more important, irritating, the book is not bad reading, especially if taken in small doses. Mr. Alexander's sense of the motives that actuate individuals is often bad, but his sense of motives in the mass is good, and the only pity is that he could not more completely synthesize it into fiction.

Holmes Alexander

Reading Matter

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN. By Michael Arlen. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1939. 302 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by ELMER DAVIS

THIS book will distress the admirers of both the earlier and the later Arlen, though they collaborated in writing it. There are flashes of the Arlen who wrote "These Charming People" and "The Green Hat" — notably the first ten pages. They have little to do with the rest of the story and there is nothing much in them—only the conversation of a couple of barflies in Paris. But they are reading matter; and now that most authors are conscious of their duty to save the world there seem to be few people left who care to waste their time writing reading matter.

Also there are flashes of the Arlen who wrote "Man's Mortality"—a man interested in the problem of good and evil, and what lies beyond both; in the mutations and possible destiny of human nature. And there is a great assortment of other material, which perhaps could not have been fused into a novel that would make an emotional impact on the reader, even by the hottest flame of creative concentration. But the fire burned very low when this one was written; it reads like a collection of chapters (or first drafts of chapters) for a novel (or several novels) which never blend into one piece at all.

Michael Arlen

The three or four leading characters are "men who are so profoundly wretched because they dislike themselves," who know "the self-hatred of the next-best man because he is not the complete man." One of these miserable persons, the narrator, is eventually redeemed by a good woman's love: but since this was unable to cure another character, the narrator must have had some stuff in himself too. The Flying Dutchman of the title is an English newspaper proprietor who had sold his soul to the devil and then tried to buy it back, only to find that he had no money that was good in that market. So long as there is a mystery about what his particular kind of skulduggery was, the story has some suspense; but as with most mysteries, its disclosure is something of an anti-climax.

There may be readers who will get a better two dollars' worth out of this ragbag of semi-finished ideas than they might get out of a smoother product with nothing in it. But from a craftsman so accomplished as Arlen, a thinker so acute and subtle if not particularly profound, we have a right to expect something a good deal better. This reads like a book written by a sick man who was in a hurry to get something finished anyhow before he gave out. Readers of "Man's Mortality" will hope that Arlen makes a speedy recovery, and is able to turn the heat on his material next time.

Elmer Davis, who is best known as a journalist and commentator on the passing scene, is also a novelist. Among his works of fiction are "Friends of Mr. Sweeney," a newspaper novel, and "Giant-Killer," a novelized version of the Biblical story of David.

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BOOK PREVIEW*

Whig Society in the Eighteenth Century

BY DAVID CECIL

A Lady of Whig Society—Lady Caroline Lamb, from a water-color sketch in the possession of the Marquis of Crewe.

THE eighteenth century was the age of clubs; and Whig society itself was a sort of club, exclusive, but in which those who managed to achieve membership lived on equal terms; a rowdy, rough-and-tumble club, full of conflict and plain speaking, where people were expected to stand up for themselves and take and give hard knocks. At Eton the little dukes and earls cuffed and bullied each other like street urchins. As mature persons in their country homes, or in the pillared rooms of Brooks's Club, their intercourse continued more politely, yet with equal familiarity. While their House of Commons life passed in a robust atmosphere of combat and crisis and defeat. The Whigs despised the royal family; and there was certainly none of the hush and punctilio of court existence about them. Within the narrow limits of their world they were equalitarians.

Their life, in fact, was essentially a normal life, compounded of the same elements as those of general humanity, astir with the same clamor and clash and aspiration and competition as filled the streets round their august dwellings. Only, it was normal life played out on a colossal stage and with magnificent scenery and costumes. Their houses were homes, but homes with sixty bedrooms, set in grounds five miles round; they fought to keep their jobs, but the jobs were embassies and prime ministerships; their sons went to the same universities as humbler students, but were distinguished from them there by a nobleman's gold-tasselled mortarboard. When the Duke of Devonshire took up botany, he sent out a special expedition to the East Indies to search for rare plants; Lord Egremont liked pictures, so he filled a gallery with Claudes and Correggios; young Lord Palmerstown was offered the Chancellorship of the Exchequer a year or two after entering Parliament.

This curiously blended life produced a curiously blended type of character. With so many opportunities for action, its interests were predominantly active. Most of the men were engaged in politics. And the women—for they lived to please the men—were political too. They listened, they sympathized, they advised; through them two statesmen might make overtures to each other, or effect a reconciliation. But politics then were not the life sentence to hard labor that in our iron age they have become. Parliament only sat for a few months in the year; and even during the session, debates did not start till the late afternoon. The Whigs had the rest of their time to devote to other things. If they were sporting they raced and hunted; if interested in agriculture they farmed on an ambitious scale; if artistic they collected marbles and medals; if intellectual they read history and philosophy; if literary they composed compliments in verse and sonorous, platitudinous orations. But the chief of their spare time was given up to social life. They gave balls, they founded clubs, they played cards, they got up private theatricals: they cultivated friendship, and every variety, platonic and less platonic, of the art of love. Their ideal was the Renaissance ideal of the whole man, whose aspiration it is to make the most of every advantage, intellectual and sensual, that life has to offer.

In practice, of course, this ideal was not so broad as it sounds. The Whigs could not escape the limitations imposed by the splendor of their circumstances. Like all aristocrats they tended to be amateurs. When life is so free and so pleasant, a man is not likely to endure the drudgery necessary to make himself really expert in any one thing. Even in those affairs of state which took up most of the Whigs' time, they troubled little with the dry details of economic theory or administrative practice. Politics to them meant first of all personalities, and secondly general principles. And general principles to them were an occasion for expression rather than thought. They did not dream of questioning the fundamental canons of Whig orthodoxy. All believed in ordered liberty, low taxation, and the enclosure of land; all disbelieved in despotism and democracy. Their only concern was to restate these indisputable truths in a fresh and effective fashion.

Again, their taste was a little philistine. Aristocratic taste nearly always is. Those whose ordinary course of life is splendid and satisfying, find it hard to recognize the deeper value of the exercises of the solitary imagination; art to them is not the fulfilment of the soul, but an ornamental appendage to existence. Moreover, the English nobility were too much occupied with practical affairs to achieve the fullest intellectual life. They admired what was elegant, sumptuous, and easy to understand; portraits that were good likenesses and pleasing decorations; architecture which appropriately housed a stately life. In books, they appreciated acute, wittily phrased observation of human nature, or noble sentiments expressed in flowing periods; Cicero, Pope, Horace, Burke. The strange and the harsh they dismissed immediately. Among contemporary authors they appreciated Jane Austen, condemned Crabbe, for the most part, as sordid and low; and neglected Blake almost entirely. If they had read him, they would not have liked him. For—it is another of their limitations—they

*This week The Saturday Review presents an extract from "The Young Melbourne," by David Cecil, shortly to be published by the Bobbs-Merrill Company.

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were not spiritual. Their education did not encourage them to be; and, anyway, they found this world too absorbing to concern themselves much with the next. The bolder spirits among them were atheists. The average person accepted Christianity, but in a straightforward spirit, innocent of mysticism and theological exactitude.

Further, their circumstances did not encourage the virtues of self-control. Good living gave them zest; wealth gave them opportunity; and they threw themselves into their pleasures with an animal recklessness at once terrifying and exhilarating to a modern reader.

Still, unseemly as some of its manifestations were, one must admit that there is something extremely attractive in this earthy exuberance. And, as a matter of fact, it was the inevitable corollary of their virtues. English society had the merits of its defects. Its wide scope, its strong root in the earth, gave it an astounding, an irresistible vitality. For all their dissipation there was nothing decadent about these eighteenth century aristocrats. Their excesses came from too much life, not too little. And it was the same vitality that gave them their predominance in public life. They took on the task of directing England's destinies with the same self-confident vigor that they drank and diced. It was this vigor that made Pitt Prime Minister at twenty-four years old, that enabled the Foxites to keep the flag of liberty flying against the united public opinion of a panic-stricken nation. Nor did they let their pleasures interfere with these more serious activities. After eighteen hours of uninterrupted gambling, Charles Fox would arrive at the House of Commons to electrify his fellow members by a brilliant discourse on American taxation. Rakes and ladies of fashion intersperse their narratives of intrigue with discussions on politics, on literature, even on morals. For they were not unmoral. Their lapses came from passion not from principle; and they are liable at any time to break out in contrite acknowledgments of guilt, and artless resolutions for future improvement. Indeed it was one of the paradoxes created by their mixed composition that, though they were worldly, they were not sophisticated. Their elaborate manners masked simple reactions. Like their mode of life their characters were essentially natural; spontaneous, unintrospective, brimming over with normal feelings, love of home and family, loyalty, conviviality, desire for fame, hero-worship, patriotism. And they showed their feelings too. Happy creatures! They lived before the days of the stiff upper lip and the inhibited public school Englishman. A manly tear stood in their eye at the story of a heroic deed: they declared their loves in a strain of flowery hyperbole.

They were equally frank about their less elevated sentiments. Eighteenth century rationalism combined with rural common sense to make them robustly ready to face unedifying facts. And they declared their impressions with a brusque honesty, outstandingly characteristic of them. From Sir Robert Walpole who encouraged coarse conversation on the ground that it was the only form of talk which everyone enjoyed, down to the Duke of Wellington who described the army of his triumphs as composed of "the scum of the earth, enlisted for drink," the Augustan aristocracy, Whig and Tory alike, said what they thought with a superb disregard for public opinion. For if they were not original they were independent-minded. The conventions which bounded their lives were conventions of form only. Since they had been kings of their world from birth they were free from the tiresome inhibitions that are induced by a sense of inferiority. Within the locked garden of their society, individuality flowered riotous and rampant. Their typical figures show up beside the muted introverts of to-day as clear-cut and idiosyncratic as characters in Dickens. They took for granted that you spoke your mind and followed your impulses. If these were odd they were amused but not disapproving. They enjoyed eccentrics; George Selwyn who never missed an execution, Beau Brummel who took three hours to tie his cravat. The firm English soil in which they were rooted, the spacious freedom afforded by their place in the world, allowed personality to flourish in as many bold and fantastic shapes as it pleased.

But it was always a garden plant, a civilized growth. Whatever their eccentricities, the Whig nobles were never provincial and never uncouth. They had that effortless knowledge of the world that comes only to those, who from childhood have been accustomed to move in a complex society; that delightful unassertive confidence possible only to people who have never had cause to doubt their social position. And they carried to the finest degree of cultivation those social arts which engaged so much of their time. Here we come to their outstanding distinction. They were the most agreeable society England has ever known. The character of their agreeability was of a piece with the rest of them; mundane, straightforward, a trifle philistine, largely concerned with gossip, not given to subtle analyses or flights of fancy. But it had all their vitality and all their sense of style. It was incomparably racy and spontaneous and accomplished; based solidly on a wide culture and experience, yet free to express itself in bursts of high spirits, in impulses of appreciation, in delicate movements of sentiment, in graceful compliments. For it had its grace; a virile classical grace like that of the Chippendale furniture which adorned its rooms, lending a glittering finish to its shrewd humor, its sharp-eyed observation, its vigorous disquisitions on men and things. Educated without pedantry, informal but not slipshod, polished but not precious, brilliant without fatigue, it combined in an easy perfection the charms of civilization and nature. Indeed the whole social life of the period shines down the perspective of history like some masterpiece of natural art; a prize bloom, nurtured in shelter and sunshine and the richest soil, the result of generations of breeding and blending, that spreads itself to the open sky in strength and beauty.

It was at its most characteristic in the middle of the century, it was at its most dazzling towards its close. By 1780 a new spirit was rising in the world. Ossian had taught people to admire ruins and ravines, Rousseau to examine the processes of the heart; with unpowdered heads and the ladies in simple muslin dresses, they paced the woods meditating, in Cowperlike mood, on the tender influences of nature. Though they kept the style and good sense of their fathers, their sympathies were wider. At the same time their feelings grew more refined. The hardness, which had marred the previous age, dwindled. Gainsborough, not Hogarth, mirrored the taste of the time; sensibility became a fashionable word. For a fleeting moment Whig society had a foot in two worlds and made the best of both of them. The lucid outline of eighteenth-century civilization was softened by the glow of the romantic dawn.

. Dawn—but for them it was sunset. The same spirit that tinged them with their culminating glory was also an omen of their dissolution. For the days of aristocratic supremacy were numbered. By the iron laws which condition the social structure of man's existence, it could only last as long as it maintained an ecomonic predominance. With the coming of the Industrial Revolution this predominance began to pass from the landlords to other ranks of the community. Already by the close of the century, go-ahead manufacturers in the north were talking of Parliamentary reform; already, in the upper rooms of obscure London alleys, working men met together to clamor for liberty, equality, and fraternity. Within forty years of its zenith, the Whig world was completely swept away. Only a few survivors lingered on to illustrate to an uncomprehending generation the charm of the past.

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Our Menaced Main Streets

OUR TOWN'S BUSINESS. By Omar and Ryllis Goslin. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co. 1939. 355 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by MIRIAM BEARD

LONGER than any other great nation, except perhaps Germany, America has remained a country of small towns. Relatively, we were very late in developing the metropolis and, even when we grew big cities at last, our federalism prevented any one of them from dominating the national life. No single monster capital, no London or Paris, could overshadow and humble as well as govern our innumerable Main Streets. Only now, it seems, are we entering on a delayed and painful awakening from the long dream of localism.

"Our Town's Business" is evidence of this spreading disquiet on the American Main Street. A certain uneasiness has apparently crept into the corner store and comfortable front porches of that famous thoroughfare. The boosting spirit is stilled. The village—which in America would never willingly endure that name—has not yet grown into a town; the town has still not become a city. Both are stagnating. And our small town pride—was it anything but an anachronism, after all?—is suffering. It is hard to imagine that unique America is menaced by the same tendencies toward concentration of wealth and centralization of power which have already doomed foreign localisms.

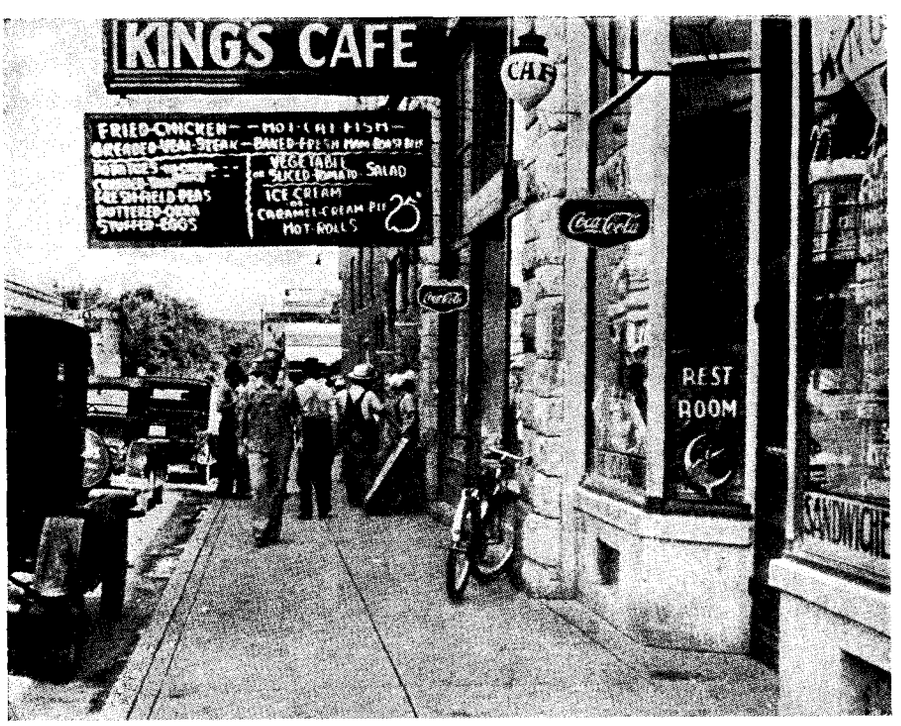
When the National Association of Business and Professional Women recently set its member clubs to studying the historic and economic foundations of their communities, the Goslins assisted in preparing the program and, while their book is produced independently, it is clearly addressed to a similar wide and popular audience with similar queries. One will not find in it such new masses of data as filled Dr. E. L. Thorndike's "Your City." The Goslins have not attempted to write a fresh history of purely local business development, though one is so badly needed, or to turn sociologists' attention away from their well-loved "rural psychology" to the unexplored small town psychology. Indeed, they are not speaking to the expert; they are making a valiant effort to bring sociology and economics, gathered into a simple and moving story, directly to the bewildered citizen.

Starting from a rather idyllic description of the self-sufficient community of the past century, the authors show the disintegration of the old simplicity and security under the pressure of mechanization. Progress has been bought by sacrifice: "A community no longer controls its own destiny. To a large extent the American town has lost its independence." Nor has it gained true prosperity. Despite neon lights and platoons of shiny cars, it may be actually "in the red," steadily losing money. Inviting readers to draw up the balance sheet of their communities, the Goslins provide charts for such inventories.

In chapters called "Can We Buy American?" and "Testing the American Way," the future of the small town is explored. The Goslins find no salvation in attempted conquests of foreign markets; not by looking abroad for customers, but by making better customers of our own neighbors and in developing home resources, is the small town to regain its footing. Pleading for organized planning, though one "designed by ballot," they conclude: "We are not content to accept either the shackles of insecurity or the rule of the dictator."

A simple conclusion, perhaps, but by no means academic, as the case of Germany seems to prove. For Germany was a land of localism, unified only after 1870, when big cities sprang up suddenly, at a terrible cost to the older moderate-sized towns, the heritage of medieval times. In a sense, the Nazi movement may be interpreted as the death-agony of the small town, its final effort to defend itself against bigness—an effort which indeed succeeded in blighting metropolitan and cosmopolitan culture, but which ironically has only completed the work of centralization in economy and government. If the decline of our own Main Streets is not to produce outbursts of ignorance and violence here, there must be much self-searching and enlightenment. The excellent primer of the Goslins, with its simple and temperate style and dramatic picture-graphs, leads in the right direction.

Miriam Beard is the author of "A History of the Business Man."



Photograph by Arthur Rothstein of a Middle Western town. From "Roots of America," by Charles Morrow Wilson (Funk & Wagnalls).

Piracy in a Whaler

MUTINY AT MIDNIGHT. By Edouard Stackpole. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1939. 245 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by IRVIN ANTHONY

WHEN a descendant of the Stackpoles and Pinkhams writes about whaling ships, he is dealing with things in which he has a hereditary right; and when that descendant happens to be President of the Nantucket Historical Society, and digs up the story of a mutiny in a Nantucket whaler, the reader is assured of both an authentic and a sympathetic narrative.

Mr. Stackpole has not betrayed our expectations. He relates the story of the *Globe* substantially as Lay and Hussey gave the facts six years after the end of the voyage in 1826. Mutiny in a whaler, the murder of her officers, a cruise under pirate articles among the Marshall and Gilbert Islands, an attempt to set up an island

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empire in place of the sovereignty of a mere ship, the miraculous salvation of Lay and Hussey, and their adventures before they regained their Nantucket homes are the stuff from which the book is fashioned.

Sea stories and juveniles have always in common a natural simplicity. The men of the *Globe* are rugged, simple souls, adequate for the taking of whales, but at heart no more subtle than children. Hussey at the time he lived through the events of the story was a mere boy. The stuff of youth is there, callow, crude, but sincere. To enter the pages is to find the stamp of boyhood. Mr. Stackpole has not tampered with this essential quality. It has limited what he could do with the material, but he has been honest. If he has made a character out of Cyrus Hussey beyond the historical truth, he is within his rights as a story-teller; in all else he has despised exaggeration. This stiffens the style of the book, and limits the possibilities of the story, but the lad who reads "Mutiny at Midnight" meets at first hand the men of the old *Globe* in the actual light of the happenings that were to fulfill her destiny.

Irvin Anthony is the author of "The Sage of the Bounty."

Myth and Modern Literature

(*Continued from page* 4)

by the presence of African slaves, was very close to European society in the eighteenth century. It was not English, it was not French; it was, in fact, like nothing but itself. It had few cities. But as in provincial France before 1789, as in countrified England before the industrial revolution, society was still based on the family. Its structure was regulated by custom, as, though affected by climate, its speech and manners were maintained by tradition. It was not everywhere established; the wilderness constantly encroached on cultivation. And in the mountains, it was displaced by an even older order of living—one which, late as it may have come to America, was scarcely to be found in Western Europe, except in its wilder and more remote regions, much after the seventeenth century. One of these regions was the Scotch Highlands, where change was so slow that it is said as late as 1745, after the battle of Culloden, the Scotch dead were buried as clansmen, all of one name in a common earth, while the English dead were accorded each his separate grave. The Scotch came to America about this time in some numbers, and it may be it was they who taught their ways to the Appalachians. At all events, the Southern mountaineer was tribal. And unless Mr. Jesse Stuart in "Head of W-Hollow" is writing about the past, he remains so.

When I say that in so far as there was a social order in the Old South, its source was in the family, I may seem to be saying something that is as true anywhere as there. For we assume that no other source is possible for society. But it is not so where industrialism has reached a sufficiently advanced state: then only the individual counts. The political man presupposes a social order and the old Southerner was if anything too exclusively concerned with politics. The economic man cannot but hasten the arrival of anarchy. This contrast is at the core of Allen Tate's "The Fathers," as it underlies nearly everything that poet has written in prose.

Southern writers, having a myth to work with, could oppose to it the "minute particulars of mankind." In the Old South they discovered a past which they could by no means altogether praise, but which was not without its power for truth. It could be used, not merely in contrast to the present—both as that present belongs to the South and to other parts of the country which have no such past—but in criticism of it. The Old South was a possible, a proved, form of life. It is because he is aware of what a Sartoris once stood for, that Mr. Faulkner can recount to such bitter effect the conduct without honor and without shame of a Snopes. Mr. Faulkner knows how hard the human condition is for mankind to maintain. When economics is allowed to take its course, the result is the poor-white family in "As I Lay Dying," who can hold to their human obligations only at the cost of tremendous effort. When nature is allowed to take its course, as it can be perhaps even more easily in the South than elsewhere, the result is a Snopes, who only in outward shape is a man. It is this knowledge, won out of a myth, that gives Faulkner's words weight, even when he speaks to those outside of his region. He is one of its serious writers. There are others. Of all of them I think it can be said that when they damn the South, they are damning man's inhumanity, and when they praise it, they are but praising the humane tradition.

The two most conspicuous failures in American letters of recent years have been Thomas Wolfe and Hart Crane. What the one in his novels, the other in his poems, meant to write about was the greatness of America. As a theme, it was in the air when they began writing, and if any could have written of it, they should have done so. Both had gifts in abundance; both shared "the breath released" of a new world, a world of the machine whose accomplishments, great as they were, were as nothing to its promises of progress; both had access, almost at will, to that secret source of energy we call genius. America is great, in many ways; but the consciousness they had of a country which had spread across a continent in a grandeur of covetousness was scarcely a myth. The "greatness of America" was merely a particular phase of the myth of progress. To accept it was to limit moral criticism. To go contrary to it was something that Crane, once he had conceived "The Bridge," was unwilling to do. And yet he found not much for his poem which was positive and concrete to celebrate. He had, I have been told by those who knew him, night after night crossed Brooklyn Bridge, prompted by impetuous needs, as personal as love and sleep, so that before he began to make of it a poem, it had become for him, not merely a complex of the engineer's skill, but a symbol of man's undaunted desire. But his faith was arbitrary and forced. He tried to believe in the greatness of America, and when, as a myth, it failed him, he attempted to make myths of his own. And that, I am inclined to think, is something no one man can do. Crane failed.

In working with the same myth, Thomas Wolfe did give, as no other American writer has done in prose, a sense, proud, lonely, exhilarating, of the immensity of the country. With his prodigious appetite for experience, Wolfe did record, so far as one not participating could, one after another, American scenes. His characters are huge, and they are American. But of moral grandeur there is none. Indeed, as the depression deepened, Wolfe grew more and more distressed. He could no longer consent to the "greatness of America"; for it was impossible any longer to hold to the myth of progress. Progress, of course, exists; and as long as science remains free, it can probably be counted on to continue. But progress as a be-all and end-all, progress as a word to give meaning to increasingly restless and more and more meaningless activities, that progress had suddenly stopped. And Wolfe was thrown back on man's capacity to endure suffering, both the suffering which he has brought on himself and the suffering with which others, willing or unwilling, have afflicted him. What else he could have done, had he lived longer, can only be conjectured. At present, it must be said that, for all his concern with myths, he did not and, working as he did, could not find a meaning for "Of Time and the River."

John Peale Bishop is the author of several books of poems, including "Minute Particulars" and "Now with His Love," and of a novel, "Act of Darkness."

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A Debate with An Appendix

THE FOUNDATIONS OF DEMOCRACY. By T. V. Smith and Robert A. Taft, New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1939. 346 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

THIS book illustrates a truth which should be axiomatic in literature: that two heads are not so good as one in writing a book. Either Mr. Smith or Mr. Taft could have written a better book than the two of them have written. And as a matter of fact the book is not a compilation; it is a collection of speeches made in a sort of cut-and-dried debate over the radio. T. V. Smith is a congressional college professor from Chicago. Robert A. Taft is Senator of the United States from Ohio, son of the late Chief Justice and former President.

Their debate over the radio was unimportant. It was far too polite. It was as though Joe Louis and Tony Galento should suddenly be cast as Alphonse and Gaston, bowing and scraping and palavering. T. V. Smith defended the New Deal with great punctilio, and apparently with feather dusters for fists. Robert Taft never wandered ten inches from the Republican handbook of 1936. It was a pillow-fight —just that thrilling.

The best part of the book comes after the debate. Here follow the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, the address of Speaker Bankhead opening the Congress on March 4 of this year; the resolution of the Legislature of Kentucky, relative to the alien and sedition laws, undated; excerpts from the report of the special committee to investigate unemployment and relief; a dissertation by Dr. Richard Wyatt, Dr. William H. Wandel, and Dr. William H. Shurz on the Social Security Act; some remarks by Samuel Gompers on the Labor Union and the enlightened employer; the Monroe Doctrine; Washington's Farewell Address; Chief Justice Hughes's address before a joint session of Congress this year, upholding the power of the courts; Alexander Hamilton's first Federalist paper. Here is a job-lot of political information which should be in the cupboard of every household, along with other old family remedies—a sort of political first aid kit. The contributions of Dr. Smith and Senator Taft are not of great importance, but the appendix is valuable.

William Allen White is the author of a number of books, the latest of which is a life of Calvin Coolidge.

W. L. Highton

Lawing Lodge, on Kenai Lake: Kenai Peninsula, Alaska.

Our Last Frontier

A GUIDE TO ALASKA. By Merle Colby. (Federal Writers' Project.) New York: The Macmillan Co. 1939. 427 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by ERNEST GRUENING

THIS is the most important general and descriptive book about Alaska in print. It comes as near to being the definitive work about that vast and varied area as is possible in a compact, readable, one-volume study. Complete, authoritative, profusely and excellently illustrated with photographs and line drawings by F. Lo Pinto, and superbly written, this book supplies the traveler and tourist, the student and general reader, with information long eagerly sought, but hitherto nowhere available.

The work is admirably organized. It discusses and corrects popular errors about Alaska, treats its history, topography, resources, commerce, transportation, ethnic composition, government, and then, subdividing the territory into six regions, gives detailed but never excessive data, descriptions, and anecdotes of each. Trips and tours with the cost of each are listed. A bibliography on Alaska and maps round out this unique combination of guidebook and encyclopedia.

But lest the reader gather that we are dealing with but a dry and perhaps tedious compendium, let it be recorded that this book stands out above all for its literary quality. Its author, Merle Colby, has brought to his task his novelist's perception and his craftsmanship and particularly his love for and understanding of the frontier. The result is a permanent record of that dwindling section of the world wherein still dwells the pioneer.

Labrador Fishermen

FROST AND FIRE. By Elliott Merrick. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1939. 334 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by RAYMOND HOLDEN

MR. MERRICK'S novel, into which he seems to have put a great deal of earnest and effective labor, is interesting and colorful. It is full of clear evidence of his love for and understanding of the short-summered Labrador coast and its seasonless people. As narrative description of the part Eskimo, part Indian, part white folk who make their living fishing in summer and trapping in winter among the rocky northern fjords, dependent on the trading companies which give them supplies in meager return for what they catch and keep them always in debt, Mr. Merrick's tale has great merit. But the story is presented as a novel, and as a novel it must therefore be judged, not as an essay in ecological geography. Unfortunately the story of Jan McKenzie and his girl Luce, considered as fiction, leaves more than a little to be desired.

After the death of his father, practically at the hands of the trading company which cheated and refused to help him when he needed help, Jan grew up the hard way, determined to become a trader himself and lead his people out of bondage. While he was working to that end, Luce, his childhood love, was carried off to Boston —as a housemaid—returning, however, laden with book knowledge and a fine stock of hardware and other equipment. She made Jan ask her to marry him, without telling him of her *dot*. Jan did, and they set about raising a family. Young McKenzie was at last on the brink of success, but there were other events to come.

Mr. Merrick evidently does not evaluate human character with the same graphic talent by means of which he absorbs and gives back to the reader his sense of place. The persons of the tale are very, very shadowy, and the sense of man in conflict with nature frequently mounts toward climaxes which fail to come off. Mr. Merrick seems not to be blessed with that qualification of a fiction writer without which portraiture becomes merely a badly focussed still snapshot, often light-struck, of something whose most noteworthy feature is its motion.

When Mr. Merrick learns that in fiction, if not in life, it is character and personality which must create environment for the author's mind, he should be able to use his pleasant and able style to attract a greater number of readers.

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Friendly Neighbors

A HISTORY OF BRAZIL. By João Pandiá Calogeras. Translated and edited by P. A. Martin, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1939. 374 *pp., with index.* $5.

Reviewed by ERNEST GRUENING

HISTORIES, descriptive and expository works on Latin America are timely at this crisis in the affairs of a shrinking world. The Inter-American Historical Series, translations of what are deemed the best one-volume historiographies of the separate American republics written by a native of each, performs a valuable service. Particularly does the appearance of João Pandiá Calogeras's "A Formação Historica do Brasil" coincide opportunely with unprecedented efforts at rapprochement between the two largest republics on their respective continents. A concomitant desire on the part of the people of the United States to learn more of the Brazilians may be anticipated.

Despite the importance of Brazil, which is 3,286,170 square miles in area and has a population of approximately 44,000,000 (half the area and half the population of South America), the great recent and contemporary current of interest in Latin America has largely passed it by because its language is not Spanish but Portuguese. The Hispanic vogue has widely and increasingly captured its place in our American school system and chairs in almost every university deal with Spanish language and literature. But if there is a chair of Portuguese in any American university I have not heard of it. There should be half a dozen.

Owing to their relative isolation in a sea of Hispanic neighbors, and because of a traditionally cordial relationship with the United States, the Brazilians have among our southern neighbors a uniquely friendly attitude toward us, a state of mind which has developed spontaneously and with a complete absence of directed encouragement. Fascist propaganda, emanating from the Old World, heavily financed, is now seeking to sabotage that mutual good-will. One logical counter-move is for the peoples of the two republics to endeavor to know each other more, and for us northern Americans no better beginning can be made than through Percy Alvin Martin's excellent translation and adaptation of Calogeras's work. Calogeras was himself a Brazilian statesman, an economist, a maker of some of the history which he sets down, a man of integrity and vision.

Brazil's history is unique on several counts: First: its colonial period under Portuguese rule when its pioneers pushed the frontiers far beyond those set by the Treaty of Tordesillas by which the line established by Pope Alexander VI, 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands, would have given Brazil little more than the apex of its protuberant coast line. In their expansiveness, the Portuguese pioneers resembled those who carried the boundary of the thirteen colonies across the Northern continent.

Second: the great role of the Negro. Calogeras asserts that "from the material and economic point of view the Negro constituted the chief factor in the building up of Brazil." Of even greater interest is the author's prophecy that the Negro in Brazil will disappear by absorption in a short time because of the influx of white immigration.

Third: the persistence after independence of royal domination under the Braganza dynasty for nearly three quarters of a century. Brazil, an empire under Dom Pedro I and II, espoused republican forms as late as 1889. Except for the brief imperial interludes in Mexico and Haiti it was the only Latin American country not to adopt the North American political pattern from the start. Its political history since the "republic" does not differ materially from that of most of the Ibero-American nations with constitutional precepts yielding often to the exigencies of dictatorship and with the Army and Navy important factors in potential unrest and revolt.

Fourth: the vast natural resources of Brazil which are still largely undeveloped and make Brazil the potential "power" of the Southern hemisphere.

This is undoubtedly the most interesting and readable volume in the series to date, and Professor Martin is to be congratulated on his important contribution.

The Pathology of Rural Life

SEVEN LEAN YEARS. By T. J. Woofter and Ellen Winston. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1939. 187 *pp.* $1.50.

Reviewed by PAUL B. SEARS

THIS is a concise and well-informed handbook on the pathology of rural life in the United States, written pretty obviously from the point of view of federal agencies which have lately been working on the problem. The importance of American agriculture, not only as a source of organic materials, but as a reservoir of population, is made quite clear. Changing conditions have led to increasing insecurity and distress in the rural population as pioneering and free land have been followed by speculative, cash-crop exploitation. Three and a half billion dollars have been required in six years to relieve actual want and wretchedness, right at the source of the nation's food supply. One can make liberal allowance for enterprising bellyachers who collected on the strength of others' troubles, and still the situation is appalling.

The authors, whether you agree with their thesis or not, are dead right in throwing the emphasis upon the human aspects of the problem. One need not be a sympathetic humanitarian, either, to sense that our country cannot afford to have the kind of people that will be produced in increasing numbers by the numerous areas of rural distress. It is the costliest sort of political folly to relegate the culls of the teaching, professional, and business world to look after things in the regions which are producing the largest number of children per capita. To avoid this folly means spending money where it has not been spent. There is certainly no arguing with the authors on that score. Personally, however, I find myself regretting that some of the alternatives to growing federal control have not been discussed. After all, private agencies have done much more for rural life, and can do a great deal more. Philanthropy does not exhaust the possibilities. There are heavy investments to protect, and enlightened self-interest that can be enlisted to good ends.

Human nature being what it is, I'm afraid this book may be passed up by some of the very ones who need to know what is in it. Its most excellent analysis of the manifold steps necessary to rural reconstruction is offset in some measure by the use of that two-edged weapon, the documentary photograph. One or two listless unkempt little tykes in the front row can make any rural schoolroom look like a jail. And "Displaced Tenants" —four men squatting disconsolately in front of a frame shack—might as suitably be labelled "The Boys Waiting for Jim to Get Permission from his Wife."

If we are going to get anywhere with a rational solution of our problems in this country it is necessary that we follow the old adage, "Read in the field of your prejudices." This is no easy assignment. To those who believe there is no farm problem, and to those who condemn the Government's approach to its solution, alike, I recommend this book as a most profitable point of beginning. The authors are scrupulous in their discussion of facts and have an enormous range of essential information well organized in a minimum of space.

Paul B. Sears is the author of "Deserts on the March," and Professor of Botany at Oberlin College.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 277)

T. SCUDDER:
"JANE WELSH CARLYLE"

When a book was imminent, Carlyle's mood resembled that of a brooding hen which knew not where to set or even what to lay. . . . Jane knew the symptoms. . . . Well, her husband's growls and wrestlings were the inevitable consequences of genius.

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Records of the Pioneers

THE WESTWARD MOVEMENT. By Ina Faye Woestemeyer with the editorial collaboration of J. Montgomery Gambrill. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co. 1939. 500 *pp., with index.* $2.25.

Reviewed by EVERETT DICK

IT was the aim of Dr. Woestemeyer to select a number of sources which tell a part of the story of the West and by skillful arrangement, together with editorial introductions and explanations, to present the whole story of the West. It has been well done. The different pieces, large, small and fragmentary, have been fitted into a mosaic which presents a symmetrical picture. In order to fill up certain gaps where suitable source material was lacking, the author drew from secondary writers.

The story of the sweep of population from Atlantic to Pacific is the true history of America to 1900. This has been presented by means of selections from historical writings, travel stories, letters, reports of exploration, diaries, guide books, directories, fiction, verse, folk-lore, and many other varied sources. In the original language, where possible, the documents, quaint of diction and clothed with the picturesque, tell the story of the conquest of a continent. Old editions long out of print, manuscripts of a bygone day, and rare newspapers have yielded up the story of the commonplace everyday happenings in the course of the planting of civilization in the wilderness. There is revealed side by side in their natural setting, glimpses of the humdrum toil of the homemaker in the wilderness, the thrill of the gold rush, the excitement of the mining camp, and the drama of the building of the first transcontinental railroad. There are glimpses filled with pathos, joy, success, failure, glimpses of trivialities, and of great events.

These materials have been grouped in three main divisions: the first to exhibit the various attractions that lured men to the frontiers of settlement, the second to tell the story of the continuous spread of population that filled the continent, and a third to picture the chief aspects of the economic and social development which accompanied this movement and the shifting center of population.

In the first division the reader is taken on the long expedition with Lewis and Clark and is there introduced to strange Indian tribes with queer habits and manners of living. He is also taken into the secrets of the fur trader and travels west from Virginia with him through the decades. But most of all, the reader will delight in the story of Old Bill Williams, trapper par excellence who went West to be a missionary but laid aside his Christianity to become a mountain man. The reader will also delight in the logging camp, the mining camp, and other agencies of exploitation of the unbelievably rich resources of America. The second division traces the struggle for empire between the French and English, the occupation of the Mississippi Valley, and the conquest of the Far West.

About half of the book is given over to the last division, dealing with the frontiers of culture. A place is made for the homemaker, for trade and industry, town building, travel and transportation, the frontier soldier, folk-lore, ballads, literature, religion, and education. In this section the old-time camp-meeting, the Great Revival of 1800, the circuit rider, and the work of the missionary offer a gripping story.

This volume is a development arising out of the work of a student toward the doctor's degree at Columbia University. The student with the aid of the teacher has brought forth this book of readings, the only one of its kind on frontier history. It is to be regretted that more doctoral researches do not result in such productions, for this is a real contribution to the field of Western history.

An error or two in the introductory notes might be pointed out but these are too inconsequential to be worthy of notice. The book was prepared for the use of high school pupils. It is a volume that should be in every high school library. It will prove of deep interest and profit to the college student and the general reader as well, however.

The volume is copiously and appropriately illustrated, adding much to its value for readers young and old. An excellent bibliography and bibliographical notes aid the serious student. It is regrettable, however, that the index is brief and inadequate.

For something "totally different" in fiction, read

FROST and FIRE

THE NEW NOVEL BY

Elliott Merrick

Author of True North, etc.

•

Labrador is the scene. The chief characters are a Scottish hunter, his Eskimo wife and their son. As a picture of family life it is unexcelled. There is high adventure here, heart-warming romance, bitter hardship and the everlasting struggle of the hunters and fishermen against the dark powers of nature—and of man. Above all it is a chronicle of courage, told with honesty and power.

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More about New York

PORTRAIT OF NEW YORK. By Felix Riesenberg, with photographs by Alexander Alland. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1939. 213 *pp.* $5.

HERE IS NEW YORK. By Helen Worden. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1939. 411 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

SO YOU'RE VISITING NEW YORK CITY! By Clara E. Laughlin. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1939. 84 *pp.* $1.35.

ETCHINGS: NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR. By Gordon W. Gilkey. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1939. $5.

THE year 1939 seems hardly destined to rank as an *annus mirabilis* in the publishing industry, and it is hardly remarkable that the year of the New York World's Fair should produce a large number of guides to the city and to Mr. Whalen's Coney Island. The extraordinary and unexpected event is that all these books should be so different and nearly all of them so good. Bagdad on the Subway seems to have the quality of exciting not only enthusiastic reporting, which is rare, but also of inciting the reporters to notice far different things, which is rarer still. All four of the volumes here presented might be about totally different places, were it not that some of the names in them are repeated from book to book.

This is particularly odd in view of the fact that at least two of these books, the works of Miss Worden and Mr. Riesenberg, approach the subject from almost exactly the same angle. Both reject the guidebook approach for a series of anecdotes and observations that center around subject rather than geography; neither balks at giving the reader an occasional grim shock; both are insistent that the greatness of New York lies in the perpetual change, the energetic life that makes it at once the most monumental and the most fluid of great cities.

> A castle in the Old World will last through the ages. . . . A trustful copper king builds for eternity, so that his possessive ghost may return, world without end, to haunt his high-grade ancestral halls on Fifth Avenue. The castle is drilled, mined, blown apart and tumbled into a heap of twisted steel and dust the month after his will is probated.—(Riesenberg).

Putting the spirit of such an organism into cold type is like trying to photograph a fast and fantastic dance. Another camera, a thousandth of a second later, will catch an entirely different picture. Mr. Riesenberg's picture is rather on the social tract side. He gets excited about poverty, unemployment, and the bad air in subways, interrupts the contemplation of Brooklyn Bridge to descant on the quantity of food eaten in good restaurants, and so disagrees with his photographer as to the objects of greatest importance that pictures and text often have little relation to each other. Yet the book is well worth the price, either in spite of this or because of it, and in spite of a literary-allusive style sometimes as cryptic as Joyce.

Miss Worden, on the other hand, writes straight through in the manner of a perfectly cool reporter getting out copy for the bulldog edition, and ends up with perhaps the best book of all those written for the prospective visitor to read before hopping on the train. It is hasty and needs to be read with a notebook at hand, for the subject-arrangement, a great convenience in planning a day's activities, is no help once they are in progress, and the volume is too large for a pocket piece.

The size accusation cannot be brought against "So You're Visiting New York." Convenient, clear, tiny, beautifully arranged, it is perhaps the best pocket guidebook to the city now extant, telling practically everything that is worth seeing in the city and why it should be seen. Miss Laughlin also deserves special votes of thanks on two counts—she is aware both of human frailty and human interests. Of all the recent flood of New York guidebooks hers is the only one to come out flatly with the remark that covering a certain amount of ground is all one can accomplish in a day; and it is almost the only one to assume that the visitor would rather see Radio City or a good show than the spot where Peter Stuyvesant stamped his wooden leg.

For the collection of etchings there is not quite so much to be said. Occasionally they strike a high note, but the text is flat and rather magniloquent, the etchings themselves have a certain monotony or treatment (in seven out of ten the building illustrated are framed in an aurora borealis of light) and through some trick, either of the artist or his reproducing medium, an expression of angry despair has been fixed on the faces of all the statues.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
DEATH PAYS A DIVIDEND *John Rhode* (Dodd Mead: $2.)	Puritanical factotum of wobbly English financier strangely slain. Jimmy Waghorn tracks down shoals of clues but Dr. Priestley solves it.	First class example of how *one* murder in expert hands can furnish more bafflement and zest than horrendous hecatombs.	Tops
THE LAUGHING LOON *Josiah E. Greene* (Morrow: $2.)	Manufacturer and right-hand man slain while on hunting trip in Minnesota woods. Girl in party smartly spots killer.	Grim mixture of crooked finance, warped morals, and outdoor stuff. On melodramatic side—especially finish—and aswirl with action.	Good enough
THE TRIANGLE MAN *George Gibbs* (Appleton-Century: $2.)	Heiress whose pa and grampa were slain by "red triangle" avenger gets threats from same source. So she takes up sleuthing.	Background ranges from N. Y. suburbs to western oil fields. Heroine and sculptor-sweetheart are pleasant pair of amateur detectives.	Time-killer
THE MURDER THAT HAD EVERYTHING *Hulbert Footner* (Harper: $2.)	Handsome but worthless fortune-hunter fatally conked in Manhattan love-nest. Urbane Mr. Mapin and girl assistants take over.	High-life background is colorful, if rather ingenuous; something happens in every chapter; and solution is ingenious.	Standard brand

California Lyrics

A SAN FRANCISCO SONGSTER (1849-1939). Edited by Cornel Lengyel. San Francisco: Works Progress Administration of Northern California. 1939.

THIS is an anthology of songs and ballads sung in San Francisco from the gold rush era to the present, illustrative of the city's metamorphoses from camp to metropolis—lyrical footnotes to its dramatic history. "Oh! Susannah" you expect, and "Clementine" but there is a lot of folklore here that is harder to come by, and the songs of more recent years are represented by such gems as George Sterling's "Abalone Song." Recently Carl Carmer has been editing a series of records of California songs starting even farther back. It would be interesting to see how the two collections might supplement each other. As it is, this government project was entirely worth doing and reflects credit upon the W. P. A. in this field.

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The Soviet Union in Theory and Practice

TOWARD AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE U.S.S.R. By Michael T. Florinsky. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1939. 245 pp., with index. $2.50.

Reviewed by REBECCA JANNEY TIMBRES

IN the author's preface we read: "This volume is an attempt to appraise the evolution of the Soviet State during the first two decades of its existence. The study deals chiefly with government and politics, but since communist theory and economic planning play an important part in the policies of the U.S.S.R., both were brought into the field of the investigation. I have also given a general account of the governmental and social structure before the revolution, for it is my sincere belief that it is essential to obtain at least some knowledge of the Russian background in order to understand the Soviet experiment."

The book is divided into two sections, the first dealing with Russia before the Bolshevik Revolution, and the second analyzing the U.S.S.R. from 1917 to the present time.

The first section—one third of the volume—comprises a swift and necessarily superficial survey of the Russian State from the time of the Grand Duchy of Kiev in the second half of the ninth century, through the influence of the Asiatic nomads on the early principalities and city states, the Tartar rule, the historical background of absolutism in Imperial Russia, the constitutional reforms, and the Imperial regime in action. The author's concise summary of the World War as it affected Russia, the fall of the Empire, the establishment and fall of the Provisional Government, the social revolution and the advent of Bolshevism is an excellent introduction to the main body of the volume, which is a "study in government, politics, and economic planning" in the U.S.S.R.

The author commences this study with a description of the Marxian scheme, the communist theory of the State, socialism, and integral communism. He outlines the history of the Russian Communist Party, and analyzes the constitutional and administrative structure of the government, the economic planning, and the State in business. The last chapter is entitled, "On the Threshold of Integral Communism"; the following paragraph (p. 227) illustrates the author's point of view:

> It should not be overlooked that under Stalin's leadership private ownership of the means of production in Russia has disappeared and that from this point of view the Soviet Union is definitely a socialist State. The truth of the matter would seem to be that the Marxian prognosis has failed to tally with the actual course of historical development and that theory has been sacrificed on the altar of expediency and "Realpolitik."

A student of the U.S.S.R. who wishes a quick "digest" of historical events and the structure and policies of the government would find this volume of value. The author, however, has fallen into the pit that faces every writer on the Soviet Union. Far from being "dispassionate" (as is claimed) he allows personal bias to be felt frequently. His criticisms are unequal in depth and in objective value, especially in the second section. He has allowed himself to indulge in "personalities" both in regard to other authors, and to political personages.

The book is however, well-written and instructive. Taken as a whole, it should be of value to anyone who wishes to delve—not too deeply—into an understanding of communist theory, and the organization of the U.S.S.R. today.

Rebecca Janney Timbres is co-author of "We Didn't Ask Utopia," a record of her experiences in the Soviet Union.

Achieving Serenity

THE ART OF BEING A PERSON. By George Ross Wells. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co. 1939. 300 *pp.* $2.50.

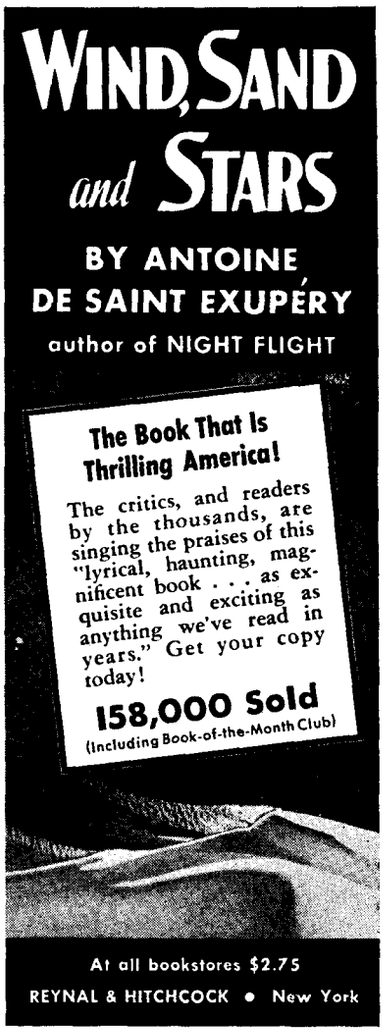
Reviewed by GRACE ADAMS

DR. WELLS, who has an A.M. degree from Harvard and a Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins, and is now Professor of Psychology at the Hartford Seminary, here contrives a readable and "helpful" book by rewriting, adapting, integrating, and expanding some of the material that has appeared in the three-day a week column which he contributes to the Hartford *Courant*.

His general thesis, which holds all his discourses together, is that man masters the art of being a person, and thereby achieves his highest destiny, when he learns how to become serene. And in demonstrating how serenity can be attained, Dr. Wells makes fresh and skillful use of the familiar stock in trade of most psychologists—the facts and theories set forth by Galen, Gaul, Binet-Simon, William James, and the strict structuralists, as well as the more arresting pronouncements of the Freudians and Adlerians — and never becomes pedantic or stuffy over any of it. He accepts the fact that human personalities are compounded of gross physical as well as refined psychic elements, and yet somehow manages to believe that in a truly artistic person the psychic easily subdues and dominates the starkly physical.

> A happy person [he contends] is forcefully and usefully active . . . he knows where he wants to go and what he wants to do. Furthermore, he has a practical program of how to get where and what he wants. He gets important work done because all parts of his personality work together with one purpose.

In telling the rest of us how we can become men of serenity, Dr. Wells has produced a book that is more urbane and better written than most of the popularizations of psychology that have beat in upon our consciousness and struck into our pocket-books during the past twenty years. And yet the same sense of unreality — of facts gleaned through second- or third- or fourth-hand experience—pervades his book as it did the books of his less polished predecessors. If our psychologists could only by some means learn to know life before they are forced to study textbooks, then they might be able to write a real psychology. In this psychology men and women would appear not as neat patterns and integrations of instincts, sensations, memories, reactions, and aspirations. Rather they would appear as the driven, thwarted, contradictory, shoddy, but often amusing and strangely lovable people that they are. Yet if psychologists saw human nature as the rest of us see ourselves, few books like this one could ever be written; for with the knowledge of what men and women are really like, there would have to come the realization that no single exceptionally well-written book, or no library of learned volumes, could improve or make over that groping, exasperating, stubborn creature which we know as a fellow human being.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The New Books

Fiction

O CANAAN! Waters E. Turpin. Doubleday, Doran. 1939. 311 *pp.* $2.50.

The basic idea of this novel is an excellent one: the rise and fall of a Negro family. The war of 1914 caused a labor shortage in the North, and thousands of Negroes flocked to Chicago, to be swept upward by the wartime boom and left stranded by the subsequent depression. Here we see Joe Benson leave his poorly paying farm in Mississippi and take his family to Chicago as to the Promised Land of Canaan. He rises from storekeeping through bootlegging to ambitious transactions in real estate and banking. He becomes a leader in his community and keeps his family in luxury; but his two sons go to the bad, and his wife rewards him with infidelity. In the crash everything is swept away, but he and his two sturdy daughters set out to make their lives over again.

All this, with its background of colored society in Chicago and Harlem, its scenes of race rioting and of quiet, is splendid material for a novel; but here it is not much more. The author has not realized the specific value in his Negro material; far too much of this might be the story of any workingman in the boom and the crash. There are a few glimpses of the stratifications of Negro society, but we never are given any real feeling for the life of Harlem and Chicago's South Side. All the incidents are so overlaid with unnecessary reporting, especially with all too faithful transcripts of commonplace conversations, that the book has none of the impact which it ought to have; even the riot lacks immediacy. One can see here the bones of a good story, but it takes some hard reading to get at them.

B. D.

APRIL WAS WHEN IT BEGAN. By Barry Benefield. Reynal & Hitchcock. 1939. 309 *pp.* $2.50.

Mr. Benefield is an author who can be counted upon. His course has been determinedly whimsical from its very beginning, and the latest item in the Benefield bibliography is no exception to the rule. In "April Was When It Began" we have once more a strange galaxy of characters with names out of some never-never land, intent upon pursuits that lead them breathlessly through fantastic labyrinthine adventures into the safe harbor of happy-ending. And again we have the swift movement of story and the prodigality of detail which make even those readers who cannot accept the Benefield formula in its entirety admit the vigor and the versatility of much that it produces. The eccentrics and misfits come into their own in these novels by Barry Benefield, and their stories provide the escape from the humdrum which seems increasingly desirable as the mercury mounts in the thermometer.

Dik-Dik is the heroine of this Aprille chronicle and she is as strange a little creature as ever sat huddled in outlandish garments upon the forbidding stoop of a somber house on lower Eighth Avenue. She looked at the moment "like a small dark witch with a chronic grievance." But that was before Mole came along. Mole is a very young man, fourth deputy assistant editor in a publishing firm, with a very tender heart, and when he takes in Dik-Dik's unhappy situation of living with a father (his name is "Bloodhound" and his entire life is spent tracking down psychic phenomena) who scarcely knows she exists, and with "Old Tiger," a trance-scarred veteran of old Italian mediumistic days, he settles into the house with them and devotes his time to Dik-Dik's diverting betterment. Their adventures are amusing and fantastic and are joined together with the wild and inconsequential conversations which brighten all of Mr. Benefield's novels.

If you feel that life is real and life is earnest and its story should be told in mournful numbers, then "April Was When It Began" is not for you. But if you have liked the other Barry Benefield books and are inclined towards an excursion into contemporary whimsicality, this is the vehicle to take.

G. G.

Miscellaneous

I WAS IN PRISON. The Suppressed letters of German Pastors, interpreted by Charles S. MacFarland. Revell. 1939. 112 *pp., with index.* $1.

Since Hitler's rise to power the Protestant Church in Germany has been subjected to continuous persecution by the Nazi regime. In the last five years a hundred leading pastors out of a total of eighteen thousand have at various times been either arrested or put into concentration camps. Twenty thousand letters written by these pastors from prison have been illegally printed and circulated in Nazi Germany. Dr. MacFarland has done a fine job in translating and editing these letters for publication in America. He clearly shows the involved religious situation existing in the Third Reich. Hitler wants the Church to be a mere tool of the state in order to promote the pagan Nazi ideology. For this reason the "German Christians" under the leadership of Rosenberg were organized. The Confessional Church rose as an opposition movement and in spite of its persecution by the official regime it grew rapidly.

The Chaplains of the armed forces in 1937 complained to Hitler that the government and the official Nazis were trying to destroy Christianity, dividing the German nation into National Socialists on the one side and Christians on the other side. Although this was vehemently denied by the government, subsequent developments proved the veracity of these charges.

Letters written from concentration camps of course are censored by the Gestapo, therefore the imprisoned pastors used quotations from the New Testament to convey their feelings. The letters themselves show the courage and faith in the future.

After clearly illustrating the struggle of the Church in Nazi Germany, Dr. MacFarland draws the conclusion that the American Christians should help to ease the refugee problem. This action he considers imperative and he appeals for help to make America an asylum for all refugees from religious persecution in Germany.

R. L.

DON'T SAY IT. By John B. Opdycke. Funk & Wagnalls Co. 1939. 850 *pp.* $5.

This "cyclopedia of English use and abuse" deserves this description. Ingenious in arrangement, comprehensive, and written with point and lucidity, it should become a standard desk book. The preface deals with the most common illiteracies, mispronunciations, and misspellings, followed by an analysis of the difficulties that cause them. This we have had before, though never better done. What gives Mr. Opdycke's book its distinction is the encyclopedia proper, which lists from A to Z the words most likely to give difficulty in writing or speaking, with concise, but readable and comprehensive, information about each. By careful selection and very efficient explanation the author succeeds in covering far more ground than Fowler in his "Modern English Usage" and in presenting his information in more readily usable form. Also, his book has the great advantage of recording the best American usage as it exists today. Pronunciation, meaning, usage, including how not to use or pronounce the word, are all included; also etymology where useful. This is not a dictionary. Mr. Opdycke lists only words that need to be listed because of mistakes made in employing them; he gives only such information as is necessary in order that they should be rightly used. His method is best illustrated by quotation:

> *A dopt'* means to take into relationship voluntarily, as an heir or a child as one's own or a word into a language; to apply and put into practice something that is not strictly one's own; to accept, as minutes at a meeting. We adopt *from* something into our own, and something or somebody is adopted *by* some one, but a lyric is *adapted* to a melody.

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A dopt ed' is the imperfect tense and the past participle. It is used freely as an adjective, as *an adopted child.* Don't confuse these words in spelling, meaning, or pronunciation, with *adapt* and *adapted,* and *adept* (q.v.) Note the spelling of the adjective *adopt' Able* and of the noun *adopt'* Er.

This book, so far as tested, is reliable and is certainly much needed by writers and speakers, whether amateur or professional.

H. S. C.

THE SABER-TOOTH CURRICULUM. By J. Abner Peddiwell. As told to Raymond Wayne. McGraw-Hill. 1939. $1.

Since Raymond Wayne probably does not exist and since J. Abner Peddiwell palpably could not, one must apparently fix the responsibility for this satire on Harold Benjamin of the University of Colorado, who contributes a foreword in which he disclaims all knowledge of the author's identity. Whoever he is, he presents here a record of six lectures on paleolithic education, delivered by Professor Peddiwell of Petaluma State, while under the influence of alcohol. The professor roams with equal facility and authority over such matters as fish-grabbing, horse-clubbing, and tiger-scaring in the paleolithic curriculum, shows how refinements of technique led to the development of higher paleolithic education, discourses at length on the sacred rites of paleolithic pedagogy, and wanders indiscriminately into questions of paleolithic social security, the paleolithic youth problem, and paleolithic politics. Peddiwell pulls a boner, however, not uncharacteristic of professors of pedagogy. On contemporary education his comments, though seldom subtle, are good enough to make the reader wish they were better. His extra-curricular remarks on economics, politics, and the nasty Nazis, on the other hand, result in satire so suffuse and colorless that the verdict can be only fair.

R. B.

Travel

CANNIBAL CARAVAN. By Charles "Cannibal" Miller. Furman. 1939. 318 *pp.* $2.75.

Your true Munchausen is a man who has actually traveled. It requires some experience of lands and peoples to improvise upon them. Mr. Miller not only knows Dutch New Guinea, he was, we are told, the first white child to live in it. Having revisited that amazing region after a long career in more civilized parts as automobile racer, aviator, tramp, explorer, and cameraman, he has apparently decided that, if a tall tale is good, one twice as tall will be twice as good. Mr. Miller went on a motion picture expedition into the wilds of eastern Dutch New Guinea with his wife and a retinue of what seem to have been head-hunters and Malaysian gangsters. Mr. and Mrs. Miller missed none of the sights, apparently, from rape to cannibalism. They saw head-hunting in progress, in fact Mr. Miller led an expedition himself, for some reason not perfectly clear, and describes it with gusto. They saw natives behaving in ways which most people could be pardoned for believing unusual, even among savages, and what is more they took pictures of them. It is all pretty lurid, but Mr. Miller enjoyed it and enjoys telling about it.

This would be a thrilling book, but for the lamentable coarseness and crassness of the author's outlook. He does not see with the eye of an explorer so much as with that of a headline hunter. His style is atrocious and his humor lively but loose. Anyone with a strong stomach who does not mind heavy doses of the inhumanly preposterous will find this narrative exciting.

R. H.

Letters to the Editor

(*Continued from page* 9)

b. George Clinton in the same year and the same subject.
c. DeWitt Clinton in the same year and the same subject.
d. Any letters written by John Laurance to Alexander Hamilton.
e. Any letters by Aaron Burr on political subjects.
f. The letters between Alexander Hamilton and Commodore Nicholson sent late in 1796, or in 1795.
g. Any matter at all to explain the relations between Hamilton and Burr between May 25, 1804 to June 18, 1804.
h. Can any person tell whether Sir James Jay was in London in 1794?
i. Did Hamilton write to Jefferson in February 1801, and if so what were the contents?
j. Did Jefferson receive many letters from the Church family from about 1798 to 1801?
k. A letter from Hamilton to Edward Livingston May 27, 1801.
m. Did James Madison write to Burr in 1795, 1796, particularly one dated August 25, 1795?
n. Did James Madison write to Burr in 1800?
p. Did Madison receive a letter from Joseph Alston about Oct. 21, 1800?
q. Did Madison write *anybody* after July 14, 1804 about the Burr-Hamilton duel?

It is realized that this is a great deal more than is ordinarily requested through the columns of the *Review.* But since these remain enigmas after a year's probing—and I am now chasing about the country for other will-o-the-wisps—it is hoped that something may be done.

CHARLES FORD.
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GENERAL

The key to your problem is in Wynn's Astrology Magazine. 25 cents on stands. Introductory offer: 6 months for $1.00. Address: 286 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Double-Crostics: No. 278

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

					1 - X	2 - C	3 - B		4 - W	5 - M	6 - I	7 - L	8 - G	9 - S		10 - S
11 - J	12 - E	13 - N		14 - X	15 - G	16 - H	17 - U	18 - A		19 - T	20 - A		21 - F	22 - X	23 - S	24 - H
25 - K		26 - C	27 - O	28 - F	29 - S	30 - L	31 - W	32 - Q	33 - A		34 - U	35 - N	36 - B		37 - N	38 - E
	39 - Q	40 - N		41 - J	42 - A	43 - H	44 - L		45 - T	46 - F	47 - C	48 - B		49 - E		50 - T
51 - U	52 - C	53 - L	54 - S		55 - M	56 - K	57 - B	58 - H		59 - A	60 - D	61 - F		62 - P	63 - P	64 - H
	65 - F	66 - R		67 - G	68 - J	69 - B	70 - U		71 - E	72 - N	73 - F		74 - Y	75 - F	76 - J	77 - L
	78 - N	79 - Q	80 - A		81 - R	82 - Y		83 - K	84 - W	85 - O	86 - J	87 - G		88 - Y	89 - E	90 - V
	91 - L	92 - R	93 - J	94 - T		95 - H	96 - A	97 - V	98 - K	99 - X	100 - U	101 - S	102 - C		103 - F	104 - B
105 - T		106 - B	107 - M	108 - T	109 - Y		110 - U	111 - I	112 - Y	113 - M	114 - W		115 - S	116 - L	117 - H	118 - Q
	119 - C	120 - D	121 - E		122 - I	123 - Y	124 - Q	125 - V		126 - W	127 - B	128 - J	129 - U	130 - V	131 - I	
132 - R	133 - N		134 - E	135 - D	136 - Y		137 - T	138 - E		139 - V	140 - C	141 - K	142 - L	143 - I	144 - W	
145 - Y	146 - I	147 - D	148 - E		149 - O	150 - T	151 - J	152 - H		153 - V	154 - S	155 - A	156 - L	157 - P	158 - G	
159 - S	160 - U	161 - Y	162 - O	163 - I		164 - S	165 - Y	166 - X		167 - H	168 - S	169 - D	170 - G	171 - O	172 - I	173 - V
	174 - N	175 - Q		176 - V	177 - L	178 - C	179 - O	180 - X								

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

DEFINITIONS

A. Soaring in spirit.
B. Curve of water surface at weir notch.
C. Ruth's people (Bib.)
D. Goddess of dawn (Vedic.)
E. Poet Laureate (1692) (2 wds.)
F. Wife of Hercules.
G. Pretentiously grand (colloq.)
H. Safeguard.
I. English dramatist (1635-91.)
J. Patron saint of children.
K. One easily affected (colloq.)
L. Observer of an action.
M. Fixed routine.
N. Capital of Sierra Leone.
O. Incarnation, embodiment.
P. Aurora.
Q. Novel by Scott (2 wds.)
R. Son of Tereus.
S. Necessarily.
T. Essence of a thing.
U. Incredulity.
V. Incapable of relief from a burden.
W. Wrong; wandering from the path.
X. Not at all.
Y. Alternate (2 wds.)

WORDS

20 33 18 42 80 155 96 59

106 36 57 127 69 48 3 104

26 2 140 119 52 47 102 178

120 147 60 135 169

138 49 89 12 134 148 71 121 38

73 61 21 75 46 65 28 103

170 67 15 158 8 87

167 117 24 152 64 58 16 95 43

146 143 122 163 6 111 172 131

93 68 41 128 11 151 86 76

83 56 141 98 25

44 77 53 91 7 116 30 142 177 156

55 107 5 113

78 13 40 133 174 35 37 72

179 162 27 149 171 85

63 157 62

32 79 39 124 175 118

92 81 132 66

9 115 159 154 164 54 29 168 101 23 10

50 45 150 105 94 137 108 19

51 110 100 70 17 129 160 34

125 176 153 90 130 173 139 97

31 4 84 114 126 144

1 22 166 99 180 14

165 112 123 145 136 82 88 109 74 161

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 16 of this issue.

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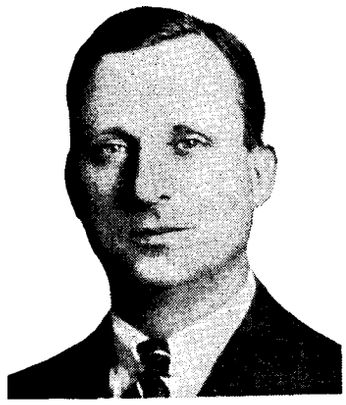
Saturday Reviewers



ALLAN NEVINS

Stuart Sherman spotted Allan Nevins as a young man of talent when he was Sherman's pupil at the University of Illinois.

Mr. Nevins graduated from the university in 1912; and stayed on for a year as an instructor of English. Then he came East and joined the staff of the *New York Evening Post*. He became the paper's youngest editor, and one of its most industrious, writing editorials on almost every subject. It was said by his associates that he could have written the entire editorial pages. Industry is, indeed, one of Mr. Nevins's outstanding characteristics.

In 1924, he became literary editor of the *New York Sun*. A year later he joined the *New York World* as an editorial writer. After two years, he left journalism to become a professor of American history at Cornell, but returned to the *World* in 1928 to remain with it intermittently to its demise in 1931.Once more he turned to the post of professor of American history; this time at Columbia University, where he is still situated.

Meanwhile, he turned out a score of biographies and historical studies, and he edited several collections of diaries and letters. His biography "Grover Cleveland—A Study in Courage" won the Pulitzer Prize for the best biography of 1932. His latest book is a definitive life of "Fremont", expanded from an earlier life which Nevins published in 1927.

For the last fourteen years he has also been a *Saturday Reviewer*. Altogether Allan Nevins has had an energetic forty-nine years.

He lives in New York City; and has a summer home in Windham, Vermont. He married May Fleming Richardson, the daughter of Anna Steese Richardson. They have two children, Ann Elizabeth and Meredith.

By subscribing to The Saturday Review ($3.50 a year) you can have Mr. Nevins's seasoned opinions of histories, biographies, and historical fiction.

THE SATURDAY REVIEW *of* LITERATURE

420 Madison Avenue New York City

Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

JOE BRYAN III suggests as the world's best bit of promotioneering—if adapted for the right enterprise—a quote from *Twelfth Night*. It is, he says, a "matchless adjuration" for the Fuller Brush Company's salesmen:—

Therefore, good youth, address thy gait unto her;
Be not deny'd access, stand at her doors,
And tell them, there thy fixed foot shall grow
Till thou have audience . . .
Be clamorous, and leap all civil bounds,
Rather than make unprofited return.

☞We alluded to Thomas Wolfe's description of the 3 p. m. Feeling. Mrs. Roy Hunt writes us from Pittsburgh that Amiel said "In hell it will always be three o'clock in the afternoon." ☞She found this in a fine piece called *The Demon of the Afternoon* which she thinks appeared—anonymous—in the *Atlantic* some twenty years ago. ☞We were agitated by a publicity note from Coward-McCann asserting that the codfish has two black stripes onto it, the mark of Satan's fingernails when he tried to grab it. ☞This we deny: it is the Haddock that has those markings, and we once wrote a piece about it in this very *S.R.L.* ☞To be sure we were right we called up the House of Freda on 9th Avenue, great authority on fish. "Anything that swims, clings, or crawls" is its slogan. Freda herself said we were right. ☞Nothing pleased Old Paltry so much as the *N. Y. Times* suggesting editorially that it would be a good idea to put Ben Franklin on a postage stamp—when he was there already. ☞Barnes & Noble, the famous educational booksellers, 105 Fifth Ave., have taken over the Old and Rare Balcony at Putnam's, 2 West 45, and are restocking those interesting shelves. ☞The Facsimile Library in conjunction with Barnes & Noble has reprinted limited editions of 3 important books that have been o. p. These are *Political Ideas of the American Revolution* (Randolph Adams), *Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution* (Schlesinger) and the *Supreme Court and the Constitution* (Beard). These three volumes are now distributed exclusively by Barnes & Noble.

☞Exciting news from Harcourt Brace: the four 600-page volumes of Sandburg's *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years* will be published December 1st, $20 the set. ☞Old Q., confesses with a flush that he is fond of warm weather, and finds it good for working. But he also enjoys mitigating it with frigorific verse, such as the following quinzy sent us by a much admired client:—

Blizzard on the Steppes

Joy plays but tournament with winter night
And tempest. When the Elements throw down
Their challenge to the spirit, oh, how bright
The tempered soul which is our very own
Leaps up in answer like a liquid sword,
Impetuous! Now does it stab through cloak
And Damascened cuirass. The metal rings
And the glad steel hostility awoke
Eager and hardy from the scabbard springs.

For Joy is not the flower of time or place
But in a miracle is secret born,
Sired by a word perhaps, a song, a face,
Mothered by pain and every hope forlorn,
Yet when the rosy babe laughs out aloud
Night shines, best aureoled by cold and cloud.

HUGH WESTERN.

☞Dorothy Kahn, whom we used to know as a newspaper reporter in Atlantic City, writes interestingly from Palestine (where she is both farming and writing) of the revival of Hebrew as a current language among Jewish settlers in Palestine, and also for purposes of literature. Among modern American writers who have been translated into Hebrew, Miss Kahn says the verse of Edna Millay and Pearl Buck's *Good Earth* seem specially congenial to the language. ☞A friend was sailing for Ireland, and we were astonished to discover he knew nothing of the books by Somerville & Ross. We were the more delighted to hear at the Gotham Book Mart that no less than ten Somerville & Ross titles are in print here and available.

☞Emile van Vleit of William E. Rudge's Sons is astonished that Mr. Whalen has not released to the press a stanza from Keats' *The Cap and Bells,* which runs:—

The morn is full of holiday; loud bells
With rival clamors ring from every spire;
Cunningly-station'd music dies and swells
In echoing places; when the winds respire,
Light flags stream out like gauzy tongues of fire.
A metropolitan murmur, lifeful, warm,
Comes from the northern suburbs; rich attire
Freckles with red and gold the moving swarm,
While here and there clear trumpets blow a keen alarm.

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